UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA–IRVINE

"A Somewhat Lengthy and Difficult Argument"
The Metaphysics and Epistemology of Plato's *Republic* 476e–480a

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Philosophy

by

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To my mother and father

ἐγὼ γὰρ αὖ οὐ δύναμαι ἄλλο τι νομίσαι ἄνω
ποιοῦν ψυχὴν βλέπειν μάθημα ἢ ἐκεῖνο ὃ ἄν
περὶ τὸ ὂν τε ᾖ καὶ τὸ ἀόρατον.

Republic 529a

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"A Somewhat Lengthy and Difficult Argument"
The Metaphysics and Epistemology of Plato's *Republic* 476e–480a

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Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

University of California–Irvine, 2011

Associate Professor Casey Perin, Chair

Through a long argument, *Republic* 476e–480a distinguishes the true philosophers from the *poseurs*, the lovers of sights and sounds (LSS), as follows: The faculty of knowledge is over unchanging, eternal, and invisible objects, and the faculty of belief is over changing, temporal, and perceptible objects; thus, philosophers have knowledge of the forms whereas LSS (who deny the existence of forms) have only beliefs about sense-perceptible objects. (Plato claims that the only way to distinguish faculties is by what they produce and what they are over. His claim naturally develops from the way *technai* are defined in the *Gorgias*, but it conflicts with the method of collection and division in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.) The difference between knowledge and belief is that knowledge requires the ability to produce an accurate explanation of the forms that represents them as they are on the basis of the knower's own character, thought, and experience. Forming true belief is a matter of believing what contributes to the preservation of the good condition of oneself, and the belief is "justified" if guided by knowledge.

Because Plato says in the argument that knowledge is about '*to on*' ("what is"), the majority of interpreters focus on determining the meaning of the word '*einai*' ("to be"). However, the meaning of '*einai*' should not be the focus because Plato intentionally leaves the meaning of '*einai*' ambiguous. Thus, the argument needs to be reconstructed in two versions.

One version expresses the premises as they are understood by Plato; on this version, '*to on*' is understood as "the forms." The other version expresses the premises as they are understood by LSS; on this version, '*to on*' is understood as "sense-perceptible objects." The difference between the reconstructions is that the Platonic version is valid but LSS version is not. Confronted with invalidity, LSS give up their claim to know.

Plato gives an argument, instead of a myth, in order to persuade LSS because his account of the tripartite soul indicates that LSS are dominated by appetite, and those dominated by appetite cannot respond well to myth because it appeals to spirit.

INTRODUCTION

I. The Importance and Difficulty of the Argument

In the closing pages of the fifth book of the *Republic*, Plato sets down an important argument, which he describes in the opening pages of book 6 as "a somewhat lengthy and difficult argument." The argument—or "the Argument" as we will refer to it from here on out—runs from 476e–480a and is an essential part of Plato's attempt to separate his philosophers from everyone else who claims to be qualified to rule.

As one of the centerpieces of the *Republic*, the Argument—which contains, as Vlastos notes, the first and fullest discussion of degrees of reality in Plato[1]—has attracted as much scholarly attention as any other topic or passage in the *Republic*, and perhaps more than most others. This amount of attention might suggest that the Argument is well understood, but that would be incorrect. In a review of a recent attempt to make sense of the Argument, the reviewer writes that although the interpretation under review is not obviously true it is "better than anything else currently on offer."[2] In other words, despite the voluminous literature on the Argument, it has not been completely understood. This dissertation is an attempt to provide that understanding.

Part of the difficulty of understanding the Argument is the sheer number of topics that Plato includes in the Argument. There are, among others, various theses about the *nature* of knowledge, belief, and ignorance, as well as theses about the *objects* of each of these. Taken together, these sets of topics raise the further issue of the *relation* between the knower and the thing known.

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1. Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato," 6.
2. Denyer, "Reading Platonic Writing," 327.

Another part of the difficulty is that Plato is not simply setting out some theses, he is openly concerned to *persuade* his opponents, the lovers of sights and sounds. His specific goal is to persuade them to give up their claim to have knowledge by showing them that the objects that hold their interest are not the objects of knowledge but the objects of belief. The means he employs to serve his persuasive art add another layer of complexity to the Argument.

As if things were not already philosophically and rhetorically complex, the Argument contains a puzzle about Plato's use of the word '*einai*,' "to be." Simply with respect to Greek language, this term can be used to express a number of different concepts.[3] The most commonly discussed uses are the existential, veridical, and predicative. According to the standard method of approaching the Argument, we need to decide which of these uses Plato is deploying: If the existential use of '*einai*' is the one germane to the Argument, then we should interpret '*einai*' as "to exist." If the veridical use is in view, then we should adopt the interpretation "to be the case" or perhaps "to be true." If the predicative use is what Plato has in mind, then we should interpret '*einai*' as an incomplete expression of a predicate, that is, as "to be *F*."

Although a focus on the uses of '*einai*' constitutes the generally accepted approach to interpreting the Argument, the present interpretation carves a different path. Instead of attempting to discover what Plato means by '*einai*,' our starting point is that Plato intentionally leaves the meaning of '*einai*' ambiguous. That is, Plato knows that '*einai*' is ambiguous and he chooses not to disambiguate it. The interpretative line set down in chapter 1 and developed in chapters 2 and 3 explains why Plato does not give any explicit clarification of that term.

Moreover, we will argue, Plato's tolerance of such ambiguity is a crucial factor in persuading the lovers of sights and sounds—and those sympathetic to their position—that they

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3. Kahn's *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek* is the standard work on the nuances of '*einai*.'

are mistaken about what the objects of knowledge and belief are. As we explain in chapters 1 and 4, Plato conceals the fact that he and the lovers of sights and sounds disagree about the uses of '*einai*' in order to get his opponents to agree to the crucial premises in the Argument.

II. An Overview of the First Part

The dissertation is organized in two parts. The first part is composed of chapters 1, 2, and 3. They are intended to give an interpretation of the Argument, including an explanation of its inferences and the concepts expressed in it.

A. Chapter 1: Translation, Reconstruction, and Context

Chapter 1 lays out the main issues of the Argument. The chapter begins with a translation of the Argument (476e–480a) and the preceding context (475b–476e). It then gives detailed reconstructions of the Argument and a summary of the important conclusions.

In addition to the translation and reconstruction, the chapter explores three contextual issues relevant to the interpretation of the Argument. The first issue concerns the interpretation of '*einai*.' Since we are not following the standard approach to the Argument, our discussion of '*einai*' is not overly long. However, since so many have followed the standard approach, it is helpful to understand the way interpretations of the Argument have been framed for the last sixty years or so.

The second issue concerns the nature of the lovers of sights and sounds. We argue that a lover of sights and sounds is generally someone committed to nominalism and empiricism, and especially someone so committed despite a general neglect of philosophical reflection.

The third issue is about the so-called dialectical requirement, which is based on Plato's statement that he needs to "have some way to soothe and gently persuade [the lover of sights and

sounds], disguising from him that he is not healthy" (476d7–e2). Various accounts of the dialectical requirement are canvassed, and we argue that it has for the most part been misunderstood. It does not mean that Plato must argue only on grounds that the lovers of sights and sounds accept. Plato instead uses the ambiguity of the word '*einai*' to disguise what he takes to be the true nature of reality and allows the lovers of sights and sounds to make assumptions and agree to premises that ultimately undermine their claim to be called "philosophers." In other words, the important point is *disguise*.

B. Chapter 2: The Argument: Part One

Chapter 2 contains our interpretation of the first part of the Argument. As part of the interpretation, we present Plato's accounts of knowledge, belief, and the relation between the knower and the object of knowledge. Concerning knowledge, we argue that Plato's account of knowledge is concerned with the thoughts and arguments a person actually has or is able to produce and defend. It is dependent on a person's having the right kind of psychological makeup and abilities. Thus, what Plato's view requires is that in order to have knowledge of *X* the knower must have an accurate explanation of *X* that represents *X* as it is on the basis of the knower's own character, thought, and experience.

A significant difference between knowledge and belief is the stability of the former and the instability of the latter. The problem for human understanding posed by the instability of belief is compounded by the tendency of the faculty of belief to induce trust in its deliverances. Thankfully, the psychological effect of the instability of our beliefs is diminished when our beliefs are, speaking anachronistically, "justified." According to Plato, "justified" true belief is brought about by an agreement between the faculties of knowledge and belief. That is to say, a

"justified" true belief is a belief produced in concert with the faculty of knowledge. The stability of knowledge allows us to rightly trust our right beliefs.

Because in the Argument Plato only states that knowledge is *epi* 'what is' and belief is *epi* what both 'is' and 'not is', commentators have questioned whether '*epi*' indicates a relation between a power and a particular type of object or an intentional relation between a cognitive state and the intentional object of that state. We argue that such a distinction is not present in Plato. His thought on this matter is not so fine-grained as ours, for good or ill. We might not be satisfied with this, but Plato clearly is.

In addition to our accounts of these three important concepts present in the Argument, chapter 2 explains the various inferences Plato makes in the first part of the Argument. The most important conclusions Plato comes to in the first part are that (i) knowledge is over 'that which is', (ii) knowledge and belief are over different things, and (iii) if there is something that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it.

C. Chapter 3: The Argument: Part Two

Chapter 3 explains the inferences Plato makes in the second part of the Argument. The central question of the chapter is why Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds think that sense-perceptible objects are always both *F* and not-*F*. We argue that they think this because our knowledge of sense-perceptible objects is perspectival. That is, one's knowledge of *F* is always knowledge of *F* from a certain point of view. Since there are multiple points of view of a sense-perceptible object, it will always be possible to say that a sense-perceptible object is *F* from one point of view but not from another.

Chapter 3 also concerns the question of whether the Argument is intended by Plato to establish or at least argue for the existence of the forms. We argue that contrary to other

interpreters who have either assumed or argued that the Argument is intended to establish the existence of forms, Plato does not think of the Argument as an existence argument.

III. An Overview of the Second Part

The second part of the dissertation is composed of chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 situates the Argument within the argument of the *Republic* as a whole, paying special attention to how it serves Plato's purpose of persuading those who disagree with him. In the course of the chapter, we explain what Plato's account of persuasion is and use that as a basis to determine the persuasive role of the Argument in the *Republic*.

Chapter 5 extends some of the ideas expressed in the Argument to other dialogues. It takes up some of the comments in the Argument concerning *dynameis* (powers, faculties) and shows both how they are continuous with some comments about definitions in earlier dialogues, notably the *Euthyphro* and *Gorgias*, but discontinuous with the method of collection and division in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

A. Chapter 4: Argument and Persuasion in the Republic

It is one thing to understand what the Argument is. It is another to understand how the Argument fits into the *Republic*, both in terms of the ideas it expresses and its persuasive effect. The first part of the dissertation explains both what the Argument is and what ideas are central to it. Chapter 4 explains how Plato proposes to solve the problem of *persuading* others that his accounts of justice, goodness, and so forth are correct. The main claim is that Plato grounds his account of persuasion in his account of the tripartite soul and uses his analyses of the various conditions of peoples' souls to guide his decisions about what forms of persuasion to use.

B. Chapter 5: Definitions and Dynameis *in Plato*

If one reads the section of the Argument about *dynameis* (477c–d) keeping in mind what Plato says elsewhere about definition, a puzzle emerges: Plato claims in the Argument that the *only* way to distinguish one *dynamis* from another is by stating what the two *dynameis* accomplish and what they are *epi*. Although this claim is a natural development of the way *technai* are defined in the *Gorgias*, what Plato says in the Argument conflicts with the method of collection and division in later dialogues. In chapter 5 we explain first how the ideas about *dynameis* expressed in the Argument are continuous with, perhaps a development of, what Plato says in earlier dialogues. We then explain why the statements made in the Argument are at odds with the method of collection and division in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

III. Conclusion

In sum, this dissertation attempts to answer the following questions: What is the Argument intended to prove? How is the Argument supposed to prove that? Why does Plato think the Argument is necessary? What are Plato's accounts of knowledge and belief that he refers to in the Argument? Why does Plato think the Argument will be persuasive? How do the ideas about *dynameis* expressed in the Argument fit with what Plato says elsewhere about definition?

PART 1

THE ARGUMENT OF *REPUBLIC* 476E–480A

CHAPTER 1

TRANSLATION, RECONSTRUCTION, AND CONTEXT

I. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide (i) an explanation of what the Argument is, (ii) a critical discussion of two preliminary issues that need to be settled before the details of the Argument can be given in the next chapters, and (iii) an explanation of how it should be rightly interpreted.

Both the following translation (section II) and the reconstruction of the Argument (section III) are in the service of accomplishing the first purpose. Section IV is designed to accomplish the second purpose, and section V is designed to accomplish the third.

II. A Translation of the Argument and Its Context

A. Preliminaries

In translations destined for "the general reader," the translator must find the best way to balance fidelity to the original language with readability in the target language. Since this translation is not destined for such readers, readability has for the most part been left in the dust in order to make plain both what the Greek text says and what interpretive line is being pursued, even if that results in rough English. (The model here is Montgomery Furth's translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.)

The text used as a basis for the translation is Slings's edition of the *Republic*.[1] The editions of Burnet and Adam were also consulted, and the very few and minor differences between the three editions are noted in the footnotes.[2] The main differences between Burnet's

1. Slings, ed., *Platonis Rempublicam*.
2. Burnet, ed., *Platonis Opera*, vol. 4., *Clitopho, Respublica, Timaeus, Critias*; Adam, ed., *The* Republic *of Plato*.

and Slings's editions are in the critical apparatus, which are not noted. In a few places, the Stephanus numbering differs slightly between Burnet and Slings, but no attempt was made to note these since placement of the Stephanus numbers is somewhat arbitrary in English translations.

The Greek words for some of the English words are given in footnotes. Really the only important ones to keep track of are the two different stems Plato uses for knowledge, and even in this case there is no real difference between them. Plato's use in 478a7, for example, of '*epistêmê*' and '*gnônai*' indicates that in the Argument there is no important difference conveyed by the two words.[3] This is not to deny that Plato uses the two different stems to distinguish different concepts elsewhere. The Greek for "belief," which is '*doxa*' and its relatives throughout, is not noted. Where a different word is used for something like belief, it is translated with something other than "belief." The choice of "faculty" for '*dynamis*' is, of course, controversial and anticipates the interpretation defended in chapter 2.

The infamous difficulty in 475b–480a is translating the variations of '*einai*.' Since the ambiguous nature of '*einai*' in the Argument is a major point of interpretation, it has been rendered as literally as possible. Thus, '*on*' is translated "'what is'," '*to on*' is translated "'that which is'," and '*einai*' is translated "'to be'." The negatives are translated, awkwardly, as follows: '*mê on*' = "'not what is'," '*to mê on*' = "'that which not is'," and '*mê einai*' = "'not to be'." These rather generic translations also anticipate the interpretation defended in sections IV and V below.

The translation is divided into five sections: Glaucon's Challenge (475b–475d), The Argument from Opposites (475e–476a), The Explanation of the Argument from Opposites

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3. Throughout the dissertation, single quotation marks around a transliterated Greek word indicate that the word is being mentioned; a transliterated Greek word without quotation marks is being used.

(476a–476e), The Argument: Part One (476e–478d), and The Argument: Part Two (478e–480a). Each of these sections is referred to by name throughout the dissertation, and "the Argument" is used to refer to Part One and Part Two together.

B. The Translation

(1) Glaucon's Challenge (475b–475d)

475B "Then affirm or deny this: When we say that a man desires something, will we say that he desires all of that form, or one part of it but not another?"

"All," he said.

"Therefore, we'll say that the philosopher is a desirer of wisdom, not of this part nor of that, but of all of it?"

"True."

"Then we won't say that the one who is picky about his studies, especially when
475C he is (*c*) young and does not yet have an account[4] of what's useful and what's not, is a lover of learning or a philosopher, just as we say that one who is picky about his food neither hungers nor desires food, and is not a lover of food but a bad eater."

"And we'll be correct in saying it."

"But the one who is readily willing to taste every study,[5] goes gladly to learn,[6] and is insatiable, this one we'll justly say is a philosopher, won't we?"

475D (*d*) And Glaucon said, "Then there will be many strange ones for you. For all the lovers of sights, it seems to me, are such because they enjoy learning,[7] and the lovers of

4. *logos*
5. *mathêmatos*
6. *manthanein*
7. *katamanthanein*

sounds are some of the strangest to set down[8] among philosophers[9]; they would not willingly choose to go to discussions[10] and such occupations. They run around to the festivals of Dionysius as if they have rented out their ears to hear all the choruses, missing none in the city or country. Will we say therefore that all these and others of the
475E same sort (*e*) who practice the minor arts[11] are philosophers?"

(2) The Argument from Opposites (475e–476a)

"Not at all," I said, "but they are like philosophers."

"But the true ones," he said, "who do you say they are?"

"The lovers of the sight of the truth," I said.

"That's also correct," he said, "but what do you mean by it?"

"It's not at all easy for another person," I said, "but you, I suppose, will agree with me about this."

"What?"

476A (*a*) "Since beautiful is opposite ugly, they[12] are two."

"Of course."

"Therefore, since two, each[13] is also one."

"That's so."

"And the same account[14] concerns justice and injustice, good and bad, and all the

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8. *tithenai*
9. Slings = semicolon; Burnet and Adam = comma.
10. *logoi*
11. "Minor arts" is diminutive but not necessarily pejorative. Haliwell argues that '*tôn technudriôn*' simply conveys Glaucon's point that "there are countless specific crafts/techniques which people can 'study' or 'learn', without thereby becoming philosophers" (*Plato:* Republic *5*, 207).
12. *autô* = dual form of *autos*
13. *hekateron* = each *of two*; Plato uses '*hekateron*' here, but '*hekaston*,' which means simply *each*, in 476a6 and 476a8.

forms: each itself is one, but by everywhere appearing in the communion of actions, bodies, and one another each is an apparitional many."

"You're correct," he said.

(3) The Explanation of the Argument from Opposites (476a–476e)

"Well now, I divide[15] things this way," I said. "On the one side are those whom
476B you just now said were lovers of sights, lovers of arts, and practical men; (*b*) on the other side are those whom the account[16] concerns, those alone whom one would correctly call philosophers."

"How do you mean?" he said.

"The lovers of sounds and the lovers of sights welcome beautiful sounds, colors, and shapes, and all that's produced by such things, but their thought[17] is unable to see the nature of the beautiful itself and welcome it."

"That's just the way it is," he said.

"And in fact wouldn't those able to approach and see it by itself be rare?"

"Quite right."

476C (*c*) "Then does the man who is accustomed to[18] beautiful things but is not accustomed to[19] beauty itself—nor is able to follow if someone leads him to knowledge[20] of it—seem to you to live in a dream or is he awake? Consider it. Is this not what it is to

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14. *logos*
15. *diairô*
16. *logos*
17. *dianoia*
18. *nomizôn*
19. *nomizôn*
20. *gnôsin*

dream: whether asleep or awake, to regard[21] what is a likeness as not a likeness but to be the thing itself to which it is like?"

"I would say," he said, "that this is just the sort of thing dreaming is."

"What about the opposite of this—the one who regards[22] both some beautiful
476D itself and is able to see both it and its participants[23] and regards[24] (*d*) neither the participants[25] as the thing itself nor the thing itself as the participants[26]—does this one seem to you to be living as awake or dreaming?"

"He's wide awake," he said.

"Therefore we're correct to say that the thought[27] of this man is knowledge[28] because he knows[29] but [the thought] of the other one is belief because he believes."

"That's entirely so."

"Then what if this man is harsh with us—because we say that he believes but does
476E not know[30]—and disputes what we say as if it's not true? Will we have (*e*) some way to soothe and gently persuade him, disguising from him that he is not healthy?"

"That's absolutely necessary," he said.

(4) The Argument: Part One (476e–478d)

"Come on now and consider what we'll say to him. Or do you wish to inquire

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21. *hêgêtai*
22. *hêgoumenos*
23. *metechonta*
24. *hêgoumenos*
25. *metechonta*
26. *metechonta*
27. *dianoian*
28. *gnômên*
29. *gignôskontos*
30. *gignôskein*

of him in this way, saying that if he knows something[31] no one is ill-disposed to him, but we would be glad to see him knowing something?[32] But tell us this: Does the one who knows know something or nothing?[33] You answer me on his behalf."

"I'll answer," he said, "that he knows[34] something."

"'What is' or 'not what is'?"

477A (*a*) "'What is', for how could '*not what is*' be something known[35]?"

"Then do we have this adequately—even if we should consider it in many ways—that 'that which completely is' is completely knowable, but 'that which not is' is completely unknowable in every way?"[36]

"That's adequate."

"Very well. Now if something accordingly is both 'to be' and 'not to be', would it not lie[37] between 'that which purely is' and in turn 'that which in no way is'?"

"Between."

"Therefore, since[38] knowledge[39] was over 'that which is', but of necessity

477B ignorance was over 'that which not is', (*b*) mustn't we seek for something over the in-between between ignorance and knowledge,[40] if there happens to be some such thing?"

"That's entirely so."

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31. *ti oiden*
32. *eidota ti*; Slings = question mark; Burnet and Adam = period.
33. *ho gignôskôn gignôskei ti ê ouden;*
34. *gignôskei*
35. *ti gnôstheiê*; this is the only place Plato uses the passive voice with '*ti*' to express what he elsewhere (e.g., immediately below) expresses by '*gnôston*.'
36. "Knowable" and "unknowable" always translate '*gnôston*' and '*agnôston*.' Cf. Bostock, "Plato on 'Is Not,'" 104.
37. *keoito*
38. Slings inserts '*epei*'; Adam inserts '*ei*.' On this part of the text, see Slings, "Critical Notes on Plato's *Politeia*, 5," 403–5.
39. *gnôsis*
40. *agnoias te kai epistêmês*

"So then do we say that belief is something?"

"How is it not?"

"Is it a faculty different from knowledge,[41] or the same?"

"Different."

"Then belief is ordered[42] over one thing and knowledge[43] over another thing, each according to its faculty."

"Just so."

"Therefore, on the one hand, knowledge[44] is naturally over 'that which is',[45] to know[46] that 'that which is' is? But rather, it seems to me that it's first necessary to make a distinction."

"How?"

477C (*c*) "We say that faculties are a certain kind of 'those which are'[47] by which both we and everything else are able to do whatever we are able to do[48]; for example, I say that sight and hearing are faculties, if you understand the form of which I want to speak."

"I understand," he said.

"Listen to how these things appear to me. In a faculty I see neither color nor shape nor any such thing that I see in many other things to which I look when

41. *epistêmês*
42. *tetaktai*
43. *epistêmê*
44. *epistêmê*
45. Slings and Adam = comma; Burnet = omits comma.
46. *gnônai*
47. *tôn ontôn*
48. Slings = *hotiper*; Burnet = *hoti per*; Adam = *ho ti per*.

477D distinguishing[49] (*d*) one thing from another for myself. But in a faculty I look only to *this*: what it is over and what it accomplishes; and on this I called each of them a faculty. And that which has been ordered[50] over the same thing and accomplishes the same thing I call the same, but that which is over a different thing and accomplishes a different thing I call different. But what about you? How do you do it?"

"That way," he said.

"So again, best of men," I said, "do you say that knowledge[51] is some faculty, or in what kind do you put it?"

477E (*e*) "Into this," he said, "the strongest of all faculties."

"What then? Shall we refer[52] belief to a faculty or to another form?"

"Not at all," he said. "For that by which we are able to believe is not something other than belief."

"But a little while ago you agreed that knowledge[53] and belief are not the same."

"How indeed," he said, "could anyone who has a mind ever[54] set down[55] that which makes no mistakes[56] the same as that which does not make no mistakes?"

478A (*a*) "Beautiful," I said, "and it is clear that we agree that knowledge[57] and belief are different."

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49. *diorizomai*
50. *tetagmenên*
51. *epistêmên*
52. *oisomen* [*pherô*]
53. *epistêmên*
54. Slings and Adam = *poté*; Burnet = omits *poté*.
55. *titheiê*
56. *anamartêton*; cf. 339c1, 340c9; *Charm*. 171d6.
57. *epistêmês*

"Yes, different."

"Each of them then, having a different faculty, is naturally over a different thing."

"Necessarily."

"Knowledge,[58] I suppose, is over 'that which is', to know[59] what 'that which is' is."

"Yes."

"But belief, we say, believes?"

"Yes."

"The same as what knowledge knows[60]? And will knowable and believable be the same? Or is that impossible?"

"Impossible," he said, "from what we've agreed on. If a different faculty is
478B naturally over different things, belief (*b*) and knowledge[61] are both faculties even though each is different, as we say—from these things it is not possible for knowable and believable to be the same."

"Therefore, if 'that which is' is knowable, something different from 'that which is' would be believable?"

"Yes, something different."

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58. *epistêmê*
59. *gnônai*
60. *epistêmê gignôskei*
61. *epistêmê*

"So then it believes 'that which not is'? Or is it impossible to even believe 'that which not is'? Think. Does not the one who believes refer[62] the belief to[63] something? Or is it possible to believe but believe nothing?"

"It's impossible."

"But the one who believes believes some one thing?"

"Yes."

478C "But surely 'not what is' would be most correctly (*c*) addressed not as some one thing but as nothing?"

"Entirely so."

"Of necessity we assigned[64] ignorance to 'not what is', but knowledge[65] to 'what is'."

"That's correct," he said.

"Then it believes neither 'what is' nor 'not what is'?"

"No."

"Then belief would be neither ignorance nor knowledge[66]?"

"It seems not."

"So then is it outside these, exceeding either knowledge[67] in clarity or ignorance in obscurity?"

"No, neither."

"But then," I said, "does belief appear to you darker than knowledge[68] and

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62. *pherei*
63. *epi*
64. *apedomen*; cf. *Charm*. 170e10, 175a3.
65. *gnôsin*
66. *gnôsis*
67. *gnôsin*

brighter than ignorance?"

"Very much so," he said.

478D (*d*) "Then does it lie[69] within the two?"

"Yes."

"Then it would be between these two?"

"Exactly."

"Therefore, did we say in the preceding that if something should appear as both 'what is' and 'not what is' at the same time, such a thing lies[70] between 'that which purely is' and 'that which completely not is', and neither knowledge[71] nor ignorance are themselves going to be over it, but rather that which appears between ignorance and knowledge[72]?"

"That's correct."

"But now just that which we call belief has appeared between these two?"

"It has appeared."

(5) The Argument: Part Two (478e–480a)

478E (*e*) "It would remain for us to discover, as is likely, that which participates in both—in 'to be' and 'not to be'—and could be correctly addressed as neither of the two purely, so that, if it would appear we would justly address it as the believable, assigning[73] that which is extreme to the extremes and that which is in-between to the in-betweens. Or

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68. *gnôseôs*
69. *keitai*
70. *keisthai*
71. *epistêmên*
72. *epistêmês*
73. *apodidontes*

is that not the way it is?"

"That's the way it is."

"So with these things laid down, let him tell me, I shall say, and let him answer,

479A (*a*) the good man who doesn't at all regard[74] what's beautiful itself and some form of beauty itself always[75] staying the same with respect to the same things, but is accustomed to[76] the many beautiful things, this lover of sights who in no way endures whenever someone says that the beautiful is one, the just is one, and so on for the others: 'Of these many beautiful things, best of men, are there any that will not appear ugly? And of the just, any that will not appear unjust? And of the holy, any that will not appear unholy?'"

479B "No, but of necessity," he said, "they (*b*) appear somehow both beautiful and ugly, and likewise for the others you ask about."

"What about the many doubles? Do they appear any less half than double?"

"Not at all."

"And the things we would say are large, small, light, heavy—will they be addressed by these any more than the opposites?"

"No," he said, "but each will always have both."

"Then each of the many things no more is than is not whatever one might say it is?"

479C "They are like the ambiguous stories told at banquets," he said, "or (*c*) the children's riddle about the eunuch who hit the bat, with what and on what he struck it. For these things are ambiguous, and it is not at all possible to think of them fixedly as

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74. *hêgeitai*
75. Slings and Adam omit second '*men*' after '*aei*'; Burnet includes it.
76. *nomizei*

either ‘to be’ or ‘not to be’ or both or neither.”

“Then do you have a way of dealing with them,” I said, “or is there a place more beautiful to place them than between being[77] and ‘that which is not to be’? For surely they will appear neither darker than ‘not what is’ with respect to what’s more ‘not to be’, nor brighter than ‘what is’ with respect to what’s more ‘to be’.”

479D (*d*) “Very true,” he said.

“We’ve found, then, as is likely, that the many conventions[78] of the many concerning the beautiful things and the others roll around between ‘that which not is’ and ‘that which is’ purely.”

“That’s what we’ve found.”

“And we agreed beforehand, if some such thing should appear, it is necessary to say it is believable but not knowable, the wanderer between grasped by the faculty between.”

“We did agree.”

479E “Then of those who contemplate many beautiful things but don’t (*e*) see the beautiful itself nor are able to follow another who leads them to it, and many just things, but not the just itself, and likewise all the others—we’ll say that they believe all things but know[79] nothing of what they believe.”

“Necessarily,” he said.

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77. *ousias*
78. *nomima*
79. *gignôskein*

"But what about those who contemplate each thing itself, which is always the same with respect to the same things? Will we not say that they know[80] but do not believe?"

"This is also necessary."

480A "Therefore, we'll also say that these men welcome and love (*a*) that over which knowledge[81] is, but the others that over which belief is? Or don't we remember that we said they love and contemplate beautiful sounds, colors, and such things, but cannot abide that the beautiful itself is some 'what is'[82]?"

"We remember."

"So would we strike a false note by calling them lovers of belief rather than philosophers? Will they be very angry with us if we say this?"

"No, if they are persuaded by me,"[83] he said. "For it is not right to be angry with the truth."

"Then those who welcome each 'that which is' itself must be called philosophers but not lovers of belief."

"That's altogether so."

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80. *gignôskein*
81. *gnôsis*
82. *ti on*
83. Slings and Adam = *Ouk, an g' emoi peithôntai* ("No, if they are persuaded *by me*"); Burnet = *Ouk, an ge moi peithôntai* ("No, *if* they are persuaded by me"). The former emphasizes that the persuasion is accomplished by Glaucon; the latter emphasizes the hypothetical character of the persuasion. The textual evidence is inadequate to decide between the two readings. Cf. *Rep*. 589d4: *Ean moi, ephê, peithêtai*; Slings notes that Stobaeus has '*emoi*' instead of *'moi*.'

III. An Initial Reconstruction of the Argument

The premises and conclusions of the Argument are numbered and enclosed in braces. For brevity and ease of reference throughout the dissertation, a number enclosed by braces refers to a premise or conclusion given below.

A. Part One

{1} Knowledge is either over something or over nothing.
{2} Knowledge is over something.
{3} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over 'that which is' or over 'that which not is'.
So, {4} Knowledge is either over 'that which is' or over 'that which not is'. [implicit; 2, 3]
{5} Knowledge is not over 'that which not is'.
So, {6} Knowledge is over 'that which is'. [4, 5]
So, {7} Knowledge is over 'that which completely is'. [6]
{8} Ignorance is over 'that which completely not is'.
{9} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then *X* lies between 'that which is' and 'that which not is'.
{10} If there is an *X* that lies between 'that which is' and 'that which not is', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.
So, {11} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge. [9, 10]
{12} If *X* is that by which we are able to do things, then *X* is a faculty.
{13} If *X* and *Y* are faculties, *X* and *Y* are different if and only if both (i) *X* and *Y* are over different things and (ii) *X* and *Y* accomplish different things.
{14} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* are over different things, then *X* and *Y* accomplish different things. [implicit]
{15} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* accomplish different things, then *X* and *Y* are over different things. [implicit]
{16} Belief is that by which we are able to believe.
So, {17} Belief is a faculty. [12, 16]
{18} Knowledge is a faculty.
{19} Knowledge does not make mistakes.
{20} Belief makes mistakes.
So, {21} Belief and knowledge accomplish different things. [19, 20]
So, {22} Belief and knowledge are over different things. [15, 17, 18, 21]
So, {23} Knowledge and belief are different faculties. [13, 21, 22]
So, {24} Belief is not over 'that which is'. [7, 22]
{25} Belief is over something.
{26} If belief is over something, then belief is not over nothing.
So, {27} Belief is not over nothing. [25, 26]

{28} ‘That which not is’ is nothing.
So, {29} Belief is not over ‘that which not is’. [27, 28]
{30} Ignorance is over ‘that which not is’. [8]
{31} Ignorance is a faculty. [implicit]
So, {32} Belief and ignorance are different faculties. [13, 14, 15, 17, 29, 30, 31]
So, {33} Belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge. [23, 32]
{34} Belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge.
{35} Belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance.
{36} If (i) belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge and (ii) belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge and (iii) belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance, then belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [implicit]
So, {37} Belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [33, 34, 35, 36]
So, {38} If there is an *X* that is both ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’, then belief is over it. [11, 37]

B. Part Two

{39} All the many beautiful things appear ugly and beautiful.
{40} All the many just things appear unjust and just.
{41} All the many holy things appear unholy and holy.
{42} All the many doubles appear half and double.
{43} All the many large things appear small and large.
{44} All the many small things appear large and small.
{45} All the many light things appear heavy and light.
{46} All the many heavy things appear light and heavy.
So, {47} All the many things are ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’. [39–46]
So, {48} Belief is over all the many things. [38, 47]
So, {49} Knowledge is not over the many things. [22, 48]
{50} Knowledge is over the *F* itself.
{51} If *S* welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of *X* is over, then *S* φs in accordance with the faculty of *X*. [implicit]
{52} The lover of sights and sounds welcomes, contemplates, and loves the many things.
So, {53} The lover of sights and sounds believes. [51, 52]
{54} The philosopher welcomes, contemplates, and loves the *F* itself.
So, {55} The philosopher knows. [51, 54]

C. Digest of Important Conclusions

The Argument’s length and complexity make attempting a concise summary ill-advised. We can, however, state the important conclusions reached in the Argument in order to indicate the trajectory of the Argument. The important conclusions of Part One are the following:

{7} Knowledge is over ‘that which is’;

{22} Knowledge and belief are over different things; and

{38} If there is something that is both ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’, then belief is over it.

The important conclusions of Part Two are the following:

{47} All the many things are ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’;

{48} Belief is over all the many things;

{49} Knowledge is not over all the many things;

{53} The lover of sights and sounds believes.

{55} The philosopher knows.

As discussed below (section D), {53} and {54} correspond to the conclusions reached by the Argument from Opposites, and {7}, {22}, {38}, {47}, and {48} are used to show the lovers of sights and sounds that their position cannot be correct (see below, section V.B.2.b, and chapter 3, section II.A.4).

D. Conclusions from the Argument from Opposites as Conclusions of the Argument

As Cooper points out, “we have to bear in mind that everything which is said in [the Argument] should be interpreted in such a way as to be compatible with what has just been agreed about the Forms [in the Argument from Opposites].”[84] That is, at the very least the premises and conclusion(s) of the Argument should not contradict the conclusion of the Argument from Opposites. So let us state the premises and conclusions with which the Argument is supposed to be compatible.

Consider, in the first place, the Argument from Opposites, which is essentially this:

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84. Cooper, “Between Knowledge and Ignorance,” 233.

(1) If beautiful is opposite ugly, then they are two.[85]

(2) If beautiful and ugly are two, then each is one.

(3) Beautiful is opposite ugly.

(4) Therefore, beautiful and ugly are two. [1, 3]

(5) Therefore, beautiful and ugly are each one. [2, 4]

There is nothing in the Argument about (1), (3), and (4), that is to say, there is nothing in the Argument about two forms' being two or forms that are opposites. But (2) and (5) are related to {50}–{55} by Plato's use of *each* (*hekateron*, 476a3; *hekaston*, 476a6, 476a8, 480a11; *hekasta*, 479e6), though in Part Two '*hekasta*' must modify '*auta*' in order to distinguish it more plainly from the objects of belief. This emendation is occasioned by Plato's use of '*hekatera*' (478b1) and '*hekaston*' (479b7–8) with reference to the objects of belief. Thus, the Argument must maintain the conclusion established by the Argument from Opposites that the forms (the objects of knowledge) are singular entities inasmuch as each of them is one in number.

The Argument must also maintain the conclusion stated in the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites, namely, the philosopher knows but the lover of sights and sounds only believes.[86] We should note that in the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites Plato does not make explicit why the philosopher's thought is knowledge but the thought of the lover of sights and sounds is belief. It is possible that Plato is anticipating {7}, {19}–{24}, and {48}. But it is also possible that in assigning knowledge to the philosopher and belief to the lover of sights and sounds, Plato is simply assuming {19} and {20} in the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites. After all, the Argument from Opposites shows that the lover of sights and sounds is mistaken about the nature of the beautiful, and so Plato could be concluding at 476c–d

85. The neuter adjective may be used as equivalent to the corresponding abstract noun.
86. The relevant premises and conclusions in the Argument are {19}, {20}, and {22}.

that the thought of the lover of sights and sounds is belief and cannot be knowledge because the lover of sights and sounds is mistaken about the beautiful. On the other hand, the philosopher not only is not mistaken about the nature of the beautiful but also is able to distinguish the forms from the many beautiful things; thus, the philosopher is not mistaken. One drawback of this interpretation, however, is that there is no account of *why* the philosopher cannot be mistaken. Yet this interpretation of the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites is preferable to one that assumes Plato is anticipating a number of points from the Argument that he has not yet demonstrated because it only assumes {19} and {20}, which are accepted in the Argument without explanation of how knowledge is infallible.

Thus, based on the conclusions of the Argument from Opposites and the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites, a correct interpretation of the Argument needs to show that in the Argument Plato neither assumes nor infers any points contrary to the claims that (i) the forms are singular entities inasmuch as each of them is one in number and that (ii) belief and knowledge are different.

IV. Two Preliminary Issues

The purpose of this section is to discuss two issues that form part of the background of interpretations of the Argument: (i) the nature of Plato's opponents, and (ii) the interpretation of '*einai*.'

A. The Lovers of Sights and Sounds

In his commentary on the *Republic*, Adam follows a certain tradition in suggesting that Plato has Antisthenes in mind when he describes the lover of sights and sounds.[87] One point in favor of thinking of Antisthenes as Plato's target is, as Adam notes, that Antisthenes makes the same inference—albeit to a different end—Plato makes at 476e7–477a: knowledge must be of something because it is impossible to know something that is not.[88]

But Adam also notes that "we must be careful to note that Plato, even if we allow that Antisthenes is in his mind, does not refer to Antisthenes alone; he merely individualizes the type in him."[89] So what type of person does Plato have in mind? Whatever information we have about this must come from the *Republic*.

A promising description of the lovers of sights and sounds is given by Penner.[90] Penner argues that the Argument from Opposites and its explanation indicate that the lovers of sights and sounds are some kind of philosophical nominalists. Penner says:

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87. Adam, *The* Republic *of Plato*, 1:337–8. Haliwell disputes Adam's claim on grounds that Plato's argument "is aimed not at rival philosophers, but at the mentality of cultured people who cannot grasp, or are uninterested in, arguments for the independent existence of the values which they pursue" (*Plato:* Republic *5*, 211). But as Adam himself notes, Plato could be aiming the Argument at both. For a helpful survey of some of Antisthenes's positions relevant to the Argument, see Denyer, *Language, Thought, and Falsehood in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, 27–33.
88. See Adam, *The* Republic *of Plato*, 1:338, for the details of Antisthenes' view and our record of it. Stokes ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 290n10) suggests that Protagoras has been considered as a target, which is consistent with Palmer's claim that the sophists in general can be classified among the lovers of sights and sounds (*Plato's Reception of Parmenides*, 56–87).
89. Adam, *The* Republic *of Plato*, 1:338. See also Taylor's repeated objections to identifying Antisthenes as Plato's target in *Plato*, 86n, 89n, 96n, 331n, 333n, 386n, 423n.
90. See also the helpful descriptions given by Stokes ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 268–9) and Palmer (*Plato's Reception of Parmenides*, 56–87).

> It is the 'dream state' of our nominalist friends, the lovers of sights and sounds, which is identified here with opinion, while the 'waking state' of those who believe in Forms is identified here with knowledge. . . . The passage isn't just a discussion of the contrast between knowledge in general and opinion in general. . . . In this context what's being called knowledge of beauty is the state of mind of the believers in Forms. And the nominalists account of beauty is being called mere opinion.[91]

The nominalist believes in beautiful plays, songs, and statues, but refuses to accept that there is beauty itself over and above each of these beautiful things. The philosopher accepts that plays, songs, and statues are (in some sense) beautiful but does not confuse those beautiful things with beauty itself.[92]

In addition to being nominalists, the lovers of sights and sounds also appear to adopt a rough empiricism. That is, lovers of sights and sounds seem to assume a close connection between knowledge and sense perception. Plato's description of them as people who "run around" to various festivals but avoid discussions suggests that first-hand, direct experience is important to them. Of course, there are many varieties of empiricism, and it is impossible to be more precise about the position of the lovers of sights and sounds. But the general impression of them—especially since they deny the existence and oneness of each of the non-sense-perceptible forms—suggests a view of knowledge that is closely tied to sense perception.

*B. The Interpretation of '*Einai*' in the Argument*

For at least the last sixty years the question of Plato's use of '*einai*' has been the centerpiece of commentary on the Argument. For reasons that will become clear in section 2

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91. Penner, *The Ascent from Nominalism*, 110–11; see also 62–6. Stokes also argues that the lovers of sights and sounds are nominalists ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 268–9).

92. Wrenn claims that there are two possible interpretations of the nominalism expressed in the second part of the Argument. The first is a strict nominalism, which holds that "there are particular, sensible beautiful objects but not a single, intelligible Form in which all and only those objects participate" ("Being and Knowledge," 94). The second kind of nominalism is less strict, which holds that "there are many different sensible *ways* or *modes* of being beautiful. . . . [that is,] many different sensible properties can be beautiful, a nice shape or a harmonious tone, for example" (ibid.). Gosling's interpretation attributes the second kind of nominalism to the lovers of sights and sounds.

below, this emphasis is misplaced. In section 1 below we state the different uses of '*einai*' that are relevant to the Argument. In section 2 we first argue that there is no way to adequately distinguish between almost all these uses of '*einai*' in the Argument and then draw some conclusions from this fact.

(1) The Uses of 'Einai*'*

The uses of '*einai*' that most commentators take to be relevant to the Argument are the existential, veridical, and predicative (or copula).[93]

As its name indicates, the copula joins together a subject and a predicate. This intuitive and simple notion is complicated by many important details, but the one complication relevant to the Argument is the fact that in many cases of the copula use the predicate is omitted. Thus, there are two kinds of copula uses, one elliptical and one explicit:

(i) The explicit copula use, in which what is stated is "*X* is *F* "; this is expressed by a construction with a subject and a predicate (either a predicate adjective, predicate noun, or prepositional phrase).

(ii) The elliptical (or incomplete[94]) copula use, in which what is stated is "*X* is," which should be understood as "*X* is *F* "; this is expressed by a subject with an implied predicate (either a predicate adjective, predicate noun, or prepositional phrase) the value of which is either made clear by the context or left quite general.[95]

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93. We will limit our discussion of the copula use to the cases in which the verb "serves to indicate (a) the person and number of the subject, (b) the tense of the sentence, and (c) the truth claim, as functionally associated with the indicative mood of the verb," i.e., what Kahn calls "*predication*1" (Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, 396).
94. For discussion of the incomplete use, see Owen, "Plato on Not-Being," 104–37; and Brown, "Being in the *Sophist*," 457–67.
95. Kahn, "Some Philosophical Uses of 'To Be' in Plato," 105. To be more precise, according to Kahn we should speak of the elliptical use only when "(1) a non-occurring word or phrase would be expected in virtue of the underlying structure of the sentence, and also (2) the same or a very similar form actually appears in the context,

The well-known difficulty with the elliptical use is that it can be syntactically indistinguishable from the existential use, and really the only way of distinguishing the two is by examining the context—about which more in section 2 below.

Next are the existential (proper[96]) and veridical uses:

(iii) The existential use, in which "*X* is" means "*X* exists"; the subject is a noun or noun phrase stated absolutely (without a predicate).

(iv) The veridical use, in which "*X* is" means "*X* is the case" or "*X* is as you think/say"; the verb is construed absolutely and is syntactically linked by a relative pronoun to a clause of thinking or saying.

These uses are similar in two ways. First, says Kahn, "both existential and veridical uses are best construed as second-order forms, as a semantic sentence operator on a first-order sentence."[97] With respect to the second-order nature of the use of '*einai*,' the veridical and existential uses are similar to each other and distinct from the copula use. Secondly, because the veridical use *posits* something, namely, a state of affairs, the meaning of '*einai*' in veridical constructions can be treated as a special case of the existential meaning if we treat an obtaining state of affairs as a mode of existence, which the Greeks, including Plato, were happy to do.[98]

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usually in a parallel construction, and is thus easily 'understood' in the place where a form is omitted" (Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, 67).

96. Kahn distinguishes between the proper existential meaning and other existential meanings. The proper existential meaning, as opposed to, say, the "vital-locative" meaning of '*einai*,' is determined by the logical function of the verb. The vital-locative meaning of '*einai*' is simply "to be alive" or "to dwell" (Kahn, "A Return to the Theory of the Verb 'Be' and the Concept of Being," 393). As such it is not determined by its logical function in the sentence; it has instead what Kahn calls "concrete meaning" (393). In the present work, "existential" always refers to the proper existential meaning unless otherwise noted.

97. Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, xii.

98. Kahn, "A Return to the Theory of the Verb 'Be' and the Concept of Being," 391; and Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, 457: there is a "persistent Greek refusal to make any sharp distinction between states of affairs or facts with a propositional structure, on the one hand, and individual objects or entities on the other. For the Greeks, both types count as 'beings'."

(2) The Persistent Ambiguity of 'Einai' in the Argument

Although commentary on the Argument has focused on ascertaining a particular use (or uses) of '*einai*,' such focus is misguided for a rather simple reason. On Kahn's analysis of '*einai*'—which is the most comprehensive and detailed treatment of how to distinguish the various uses—what primarily distinguishes the existential use of '*einai*' from the incomplete predicative use is the emphasis placed on the verb in the sentence. Since emphasis in Greek is often signaled by word order, which serves a rhetorical but not a syntactic function, the existential and veridical meanings are not completely signaled by syntax but by the placement of '*einai*' in the initial position. Because of this, those meanings of '*einai*' cannot be picked out by reference to either syntax or the word itself but by reference to the word order of the sentence in which '*einai*' occurs.

Although elegant, this analysis presents an acute difficulty for ascertaining the meaning of '*einai*' in the Argument: In Part One, the relevant locutions involving '*einai*' *do not occur as verbs in complete sentences* (or even complete dependent clauses). Hence there is no way to distinguish their meaning on the basis of word order. Furthermore, Plato scrupulously avoids employing first- or second-order indicative uses of '*einai*' in passages in Part One where he also uses the participial or infinitive form of '*einai*.' Translations are not always able to capture this omission. For example, the brackets in the following sentence, taken from 477a3–4, indicate that there is no instance of '*einai*' in the text: "'that which completely is' [is] completely knowable, but 'that which not is' [is] completely unknowable in every way." Plato's avoidance of '*einai*' in the indicative holds throughout Part One except in cases such as 478c9 where it is clear that '*estin*' is being used without any possibility of confusing it with the '*on*' locutions.[99] This

99. The only exception to this rule is 478b3 where '*einai*' is used in the optative immediately following '*to on*.'

suggests that Plato wants to be as clear as possible in Part One that he is using the participial and infinitive forms of '*einai*' in a way distinct from the more normal use of '*einai*' as a first-order verb in complete clauses.[100]

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100. One other way in which Plato makes this clear is by using '*echein*' for '*einai*' at, e.g., 477a6. It is true that the syntax of the one sentence (479b8–9) in Part Two in which '*einai*' does occur as a verb in a complete sentence allows a veridical reading: "Then each of the many things no more is than not is whatever one might say it is?" [*Poteron oun esti mallon ê ouk estin hekaston tôn pollôn touto ho an tis phê(i) auto einai;*] (479b8–9). On Kahn's account of the veridical construction we should expect either the adverb '*houtôs*' or the adverb '*ôs*' to introduce a clause comparing how things are with how things are said to be (Kahn, *The Verb* Be *in Ancient Greek*, 337). 479b8–9 meets the syntactical requirement, but the comparative notion is not clearly expressed. It is possible to read '*ho an tis phê(i) auto einai*' as a comparison between how things are and how one says they are, but the optative voice makes it possible to read the phrase as a universal generalization, i.e., "*Whatever 'many' one might speak about*, it no more is than is not."

Commentators have from time to time claimed that the predicative use of '*einai*' must be in view in Part One because it is clearly used at 479b8–9. A common criticism of this is that the predicative use does not fit with the descriptions of the object of ignorance in Part One. The object of ignorance is said to be "that which not is" (*to mê on*, 478b5–6), which is immediately glossed as "nothing" (*mêden*, 478b7). The heart of the criticism is that on a predicative reading "is not" must be read as "is not *F*," but the text says that the object of ignorance is in every way unknowable (477a3–4) and "nothing" (478b11–c1), not what the predicative reading requires, which is 'what is not-*F*.' (*Rep*. 478b11–c1: *Alla mên mê on ge ouk <u>hen</u> ti alla mêden orthotat' an prosagoreuoito;* The use of '*hen*' strongly suggests "some one thing"; thus, "not . . . some one thing but rather nothing at all." Cf. Penner, *The Ascent from Nominalism*, 225: "Shall we, like Vlastos (by implication), deny that *what is not* is *nothing at all*, on the grounds that *what is not* is just *what is not-F?* That would seem unjustified in the light of 478b6–c1 with 476e7–477a4.") Thus, the predicative reading is said not to work in Part One because it does not make sense of Plato's description of the objects ignorance.

The problem with this criticism is that '*mêden*' *can* have a predicative use. As Owen and others have shown, there are places in Plato, among which is 478b7, in which "nothing" is amenable to a predicative reading. (See Owen, "Plato on Not-Being," 121–2. Owen's analysis concerns *Soph*. 237b7–239c8; in addition to *Rep*. 478b he also cites *Parm*. 160b6–161a5 (cp. 163c2–d1) and *Theaet*. 189a3–10. See also Mourelatos, "'Nothing' as 'Not-Being,'" 59–69 (esp. 59: "'Nothing' in English has uses that do not depend on a tie with the existential quantifier. So too in Greek: *mêden* or *ouden* can be glossed as 'what does not exist,' but it can also be glossed as 'not a something'"); and Brown, "Being in the *Sophist*," 69: "*X is not* (complete use) entails *X is not anything at all*." The conclusions of Moorhouse, "A Use of *Oudeis* and *Mêdeis*," while not specifically addressed to Plato, tend to support the claim being made here.) According to Owen, Plato's analysis in the *Sophist* shows that "the function of 'nothing', like that of 'nobody' and 'nowhere' and 'never', is just to indicate that there isn't as much as one of whatever it may be" ("Plato on Not-Being," 121). This view of the meaning of "nothing" contrasts with the interpretation that insists that it must be equated with the meaning of "what does not exist"—one of the proponents of this interpretation is the sophist himself, who attempts to confuse us with this equation. Plato's argument, however, is that "nothing" = "what is not" = "what is not anything," which as Owen puts it is "a subject with all the being knocked out of it and so unidentifiable, no subject" but *not* "what does not exist." (Cf. ibid., 122: ". . . it is possible to raise puzzles about Nothing without confusing them with puzzles about non-existence.") Heinemann criticizes Owen's argument ("Being in the *Sophist*," 1–17) on the grounds that Owen's explanation of the meaning of "nothing" does not fit *Soph*. 240e. Brown ("Being in the *Sophist*," 49–70) agrees with Heinemann's criticism but does not accept his conclusion that Owen's account must be completely abandoned. Brown thinks that Owen's account of "nothing" can be emended (60–3). For present purposes, it is important to note two things: (1) Heinemann's criticism of Owen depends on the context of the *Soph*., in particular 240e as well as what Owen calls the Parity Assumption; see Owen, "Plato on Not-Being," 108–9. Thus, even though Owen's explanation of the meaning of "nothing" might be insufficient in the *Soph*., it is still viable as an explanation of the meaning of "nothing" in other contexts, e.g., the Argument. (2) Brown's emendation of Owen's account does not touch Owen's negative claim that 'nothing' is not 'what does not exist.' Brown says, "as I have argued, we can preserve Owen's

Throughout the Argument Plato most often uses '*einai*' in its participial form, both with the article and without. Such usage tends to reinforce the ambiguity of the use of '*einai*' in the Argument. Although, as Kahn notes, the participial form, '*on*,' often takes on a veridical nuance, this is not always the case, as Kahn himself points out: "in principle, the articular participle can denote *what is* in any sense, including 'the things that exist,' whatever these may be. . . . [And] since the participle can denote something *which is* in any sense, it can also refer to attributes like *being hot* or *being tall*, *being on hand* or *being priest*."[101] Thus, because the participial form of '*einai*' easily admits of predicative, existential, and veridical uses, Plato's use of it tends to contribute to rather than alleviate the obscurity of the meaning of '*einai*' in the Argument.

The first upshot of these points is that there is no clear way to disambiguate the various uses of '*einai*' in the Argument, and the meaning of '*einai*' must remain ambiguous.

But there is a further conclusion supported by the analysis of this section: Plato's use of '*einai*' in the Argument is intentionally ambiguous. Since it would have been neither impossible nor onerous for Plato to clarify the meaning of '*einai*,' it is reasonable to assume that he deliberately leaves the meaning of '*einai*' ambiguous.[102] That is, Plato knows that '*einai*' is ambiguous, and he chooses not to disambiguate it. In section V below, we will explain why Plato makes this choice, but for now let us suggest that the ambiguity generated by it is to be taken as a fact that a good interpretation of the Argument should accept and start from rather than explain

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insight that the original paradox gets its force by treating *to mê on* as 'that which isn't anything at all'. . ." ("Being in the *Sophist*," 63). Thus in the present case we could understand "nothing" as meaning nothing with the property *F*. This does not mean that the predicative use is present in Part One. It just means that this criticism often leveled against the predicative use is mistaken.

101. Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, 455, 457.

102. As Kahn notes, the term better suited to single out a concrete entity or substantial thing is '*ousia*,' the nominal form of '*einai*' famously used by Aristotle to indicate primary substance (ibid., 457). Plato does use this more explicit term in the Argument, but only near the very end and only *after* he has shown that sense-perceptible objects do not merit the name '*ousia*': "there is [no] place more beautiful to place them [the "many things"] than between *ousias* and 'that which is not to be'" (479c). Prior to the conclusion of Part Two, Plato's failure to use '*ousia*' perpetuates the ambiguous meaning of '*einai*.'

away. Further confirmation of this reading will be provided in the following chapters by showing that such a reading can account for all the details of the Argument and produce a version of the Argument that is logically valid.

Among other things, beginning with the ambiguity of '*einai*' means that the question How are the various uses and meanings of '*einai*' related to each other? is incidental to the Argument, even though the question is interesting in its own right and absolutely crucial for understanding other passages in Plato, most notably in the middle part of the *Sophist*. But the significance of the interpretive impasse created by Plato's choice must not be underestimated, for taking the ambiguity of '*einai*' as a starting point of interpretation means that the longstanding interpretive trajectory focusing on the use of '*einai*' must be reoriented if we are to have a chance of hitting upon an interpretation according to which Plato does not fall into logical error.

V. Variations on the Argument

A. The Need for Variations

Because there is no adequate way to rule in or out one or more of the uses of '*einai*' in the Argument, we should treat the ambiguous meaning of '*einai*' as the result of a deliberate choice on Plato's part. This point is the first part of an adequate understanding of the Argument.

The second part is the obvious fact that Plato and his opponents do not agree about the nature of reality. According to Plato, what is real are the forms. According to the lovers of sights and sounds, what is real are sense-perceptible objects. It is pretty clear in the *Republic* that Plato thinks that forms are not sense-perceptible objects whereas the lovers of sights and sounds do not acknowledge the reality of the forms. This is what is meant by the claim that they disagree with Plato about the nature of reality.

Together these two facts raise the possibility that in the Argument Plato uses the ambiguity of '*einai*' to hide his disagreement with the lovers of sights and sounds from them, which makes sense of his claim that he will "disguis[e] from him [the lover of sights and sounds] that he is not healthy" (476d8–e2). From the context preceding the Argument (475b–476e) it is clear that Plato disagrees with the lovers of sights and sounds about the natures of the objects of knowledge and belief. In order to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds that they are mistaken about the objects of knowledge and belief, Plato refuses in Part One to say clearly what he means by '*einai*.' If asked to explain what they mean by '*einai*,' the lovers of sights and sounds would surely say, "The many sense-perceptible things," but Plato would say, "The forms." However, we only know what Plato would say on the basis of the Argument from Opposites, and it is important that neither Plato nor the lovers of sights and sounds (via Glaucon) raise this question in Part One.[103]

This explains why Plato does not explain what he means by '*einai*' or use a less ambiguous word. If he were to do so, he would lose the agreement of the lovers of sights and sounds.[104] *In fact, Part One is carefully designed to avoid bringing any disagreement about these things to light*. Instead it proceeds by explicating the agreement that (1) knowledge and belief are different faculties, (2) different faculties are *epi* different things and accomplish different ends, (3) the faculty of knowledge is *epi* 'what is' and produces knowledge, and (4) the faculty of

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103. F. C. White makes the mistake of saying that Plato tells us, "without qualification, that knowledge is of the Forms (*tauta . . . eph hois gnôsis estin*, 479e10–480a1)" ("The Scope of Knowledge in *Republic* 5," 344), but of course the Greek that White quotes says nothing explicitly about the forms. Cf. Rowe, *Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing*, 206, who describes the argument as turning on "two perspectives on the same set of affairs."

104. If one does not accept this line of interpretation, then one needs to explain—as those committed to predicative or veridical interpretations try to do—why the lovers of sights and sounds agree to the claims about *to on* made in Part One. I argue that none of their explanations are successful because they require claims about knowledge and *to on* that either Plato or the lovers of sights and sounds would reject.

belief is *epi* what is both 'to be' and 'not to be' and produces belief.[105] All these points are simply matters of agreement between Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds. Of course, they disagree about what the objects of knowledge and belief *are*, but that is deliberately beside the point of Part One.

Thus, prior to Part Two, the lovers of sights and sounds think that the objects of what Plato calls "belief " are the objects of knowledge. The goal of Part Two, and essentially the Argument as a whole, is to correct them on this point. Contrary to the aim of Part One, Part Two proceeds by securing agreement about the specifications of 'what is' and what is both 'to be' and 'not to be', though the emphasis is on specifying the nature of the latter.

More precisely, we can say that when Plato ("Socrates") uses '*einai*' in the Argument he means the forms but when the lovers of sights and sounds ("Glaucon") hear '*einai*' they think about something other than the forms. We can also extend this line of thought to include the readers of the *Republic*, who when they read '*einai*' do not necessarily understand the argument in light of the theory of forms. Thus, the possibility assumed by this explanation of Plato's use of '*einai*' is that one person could be mistaken about the meaning of a general term whereas another could not be mistaken about that.

What this means for the Argument is that there are *two* arguments running through the text, one based on Plato's understanding of '*einai*' and another based on his opponents' understanding. For example, one of the first premises in the Argument is the following:

{3} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over 'that which is' or over 'that which not is'.

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105. On the meaning of '*epi*' in the Argument, see chapter 2, section II.A.2.

Since Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds disagree about 'that which is', {3} is an insufficient reconstruction of the text.[106] What we need are two premises, one that reflects Plato's understanding,

{3P} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over the forms or over nothing,

and one that reflects his opponents',

{3LSS} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over sense-perceptible objects or over nothing.

This pattern of disambiguating the premises of the Argument holds throughout the Argument whenever a premise contains a term whose meaning is disputed by Plato and his opponents, for example, {11} and {47}.[107]

From this interpretation of the Argument come two arguments, one that encapsulates Plato's understanding of '*einai*' and related terms and another that does the same for the lovers of sights and sounds. The difference between them is that the former version is valid whereas the latter is not. It has inconsistent premises because of the assumptions made by the lovers of sights and sounds about the objects of knowledge and belief. The next section contains the details of the reconstructions and the mostly likely implication Plato wants to draw from the invalidity of his opponents' interpretation of the Argument.

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106. They do not disagree about the meaning of '*to mê on*,' 'that which not is'.
107. Note that the issue here is not whether {3} is ambiguous about the nature of *knowledge*. The claim in view is that {3} is ambiguous with respect to the meaning of '*einai*.' However, as argued in the next chapter (section II.A.3), Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds do disagree about the nature of knowledge.

B. The Two Reconstructions

(1) Formalizing the Respective Assumptions

Unlike the reconstruction given above (section III), the following two begin with different sets of assumptions about the objects of knowledge and belief. In the first one, Plato's assumptions are given as {PA1}–{PA4}:

{PA1} If *X* is 'that which is', then *X* is a form.

{PA2} If *X* is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.

{PA3} If *X* is 'that which not is', then *X* is nothing.

{PA4} If *X* is a "many," then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.

In the second one, the assumptions of the lovers of sights and sounds are {LSSA1}–{LSSA3}:

{LSSA1} If *X* is 'that which is', then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.

{LSSA2} If *X* is 'that which not is', then *X* is nothing.

{LSSA3} If *X* is a "many," then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.

It is significant that there is no assumption on the part of the lovers of sights and sounds about the nature of things that are both 'to be' and 'not to be'. Prior to {47LSS} they do not have a clear conception of what such a thing is, a point emphasized by the hypothetical nature of {38LSS}. Indeed, their participation in the Argument is bound up with this point and expressed in their agreement that it "remain[s] for us to discover, as is likely, that which participates in both—in 'to be' and 'not to be'—and could be correctly [*orthôs*] addressed as neither of the two purely, so that, if it would appear we would justly [*dike(i)*] address it as the believable" (478e1–4). The lovers of sights and sounds are looking for the *right* and *appropriate* things to label as objects of belief. That is, they are interested in working through the Argument because they want to discover what the objects of belief are.

(2) The Two Reconstructions

(a) The Platonic version

	{PA1}	If *X* is 'that which is', then *X* is a form.
	{PA2}	If *X* is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.
	{PA3}	If *X* is 'that which not is', then *X* is nothing.
	{PA4}	If *X* is a "many," then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.
	{1P}	Knowledge is either over something or over nothing.
	{2P}	Knowledge is over something.
	{3P}	If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over the forms or over nothing.
So,	{4P}	Knowledge is either over the forms or over nothing.
	{5P}	Knowledge is not over nothing.
So,	{6P}	Knowledge is over the forms.
So,	{7P}	Knowledge is over the forms. [6]
	{8P}	Ignorance is over nothing.
	{9P}	If there is an *X* that is a sense-perceptible object, then *X* lies between the forms and nothing.
	{10P}	If there is an *X* that lies between the forms and nothing, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.
	{11P}	If there is an *X* that is a sense-perceptible object, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge. [9, 10]
	{12P}	If *X* is that by which we are able to do things, then *X* is a faculty.
	{13P}	If *X* and *Y* are faculties, *X* and *Y* are different if and only if both (i) *X* and *Y* are over different things and (ii) *X* and *Y* accomplish different things.
	{14P}	If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* are over different things, then *X* and *Y* accomplish different things. [implicit]
	{15P}	If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* accomplish different things, then *X* and *Y* are over different things. [implicit]
	{16P}	Belief is that by which we are able to believe.
So,	{17P}	Belief is a faculty. [12, 16]
	{18P}	Knowledge is a faculty.
	{19P}	Knowledge does not make mistakes.
	{20P}	Belief makes mistakes.
So,	{21P}	Belief and knowledge accomplish different things. [19, 20]
So,	{22P}	Belief and knowledge are over different things. [15, 17, 18, 21]
So,	{23P}	Knowledge and belief are different faculties. [13, 21, 22]
So,	{24P}	Belief is not over the forms. [7, 22]
	{25P}	Belief is over something.
	{26P}	If belief is over something, then belief is not over nothing.
So,	{27P}	Belief is not over nothing. [25, 26]
	{28P}	Nothing is nothing.
So,	{29P}	Belief is not over nothing. [27, 28]
	{30P}	Ignorance is over nothing. [8]
	{31P}	Ignorance is a faculty. [implicit]

So, {32P} Belief and ignorance are different faculties. [13, 14, 15, 17, 29, 30, 31]
So, {33P} Belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge. [23, 32]
{34P} Belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge.
{35P} Belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance.
{36P} If (i) belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge and (ii) belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge and (iii) belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance, then belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [implicit]
So, {37P} Belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [34, 35, 36]
So, {38P} If there is a sense-perceptible object, then belief is over it. [11, 37]
{3P9} All the many beautiful sense-perceptible objects appear ugly and beautiful.
{40P} All the many just sense-perceptible objects appear unjust and just.
{41P} All the many holy sense-perceptible objects appear unholy and holy.
{42P} All the many double sense-perceptible objects appear half and double.
{43P} All the many large sense-perceptible objects appear small and large.
{44P} All the many small sense-perceptible objects appear large and small.
{45P} All the many light sense-perceptible objects appear heavy and light.
{46P} All the many heavy sense-perceptible objects appear light and heavy.
So, {47P} All the sense-perceptible objects are sense-perceptible objects. [39–46]
So, {48P} Belief is over all the sense-perceptible objects. [38, 47]
So, {49P} Knowledge is not over the sense-perceptible objects. [22, 48]
{50P} Knowledge is over the *F* itself.
{51P} If *S* welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of *X* is over, then *S* φs in accordance with the faculty of *X*. [implicit]
{52P} The lover of sights and sounds welcomes, contemplates, and loves the many things.
So, {53P} The lover of sights and sounds believes. [51, 52]
{54P} The philosopher welcomes, contemplates, and loves the *F* itself.
So, {55P} The philosopher knows. [51, 54]

(b) The lovers' of sights and sounds version

{LSSA1} If *X* is 'that which is', then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.
{LSSA2} If *X* is 'that which not is', then *X* is nothing.
{LSSA3} If *X* is a "many," then *X* is a sense-perceptible object.
{1LSS} Knowledge is either over something or over nothing.
{2LSS} Knowledge is over something.
{3LSS} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over sense-perceptible objects or over nothing.
So, {4LSS} Knowledge is either over sense-perceptible objects or over nothing.
{5LSS} Knowledge is not over nothing.
So, {6LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects.
So, {7LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects. [6]
{8LSS} Ignorance is over nothing.
{9LSS} If there is an *X* that is both 'what is' and 'not what is', then *X* lies between sense-perceptible objects and nothing.

{10LSS} If there is an *X* that lies between sense-perceptible objects and nothing, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.
{11LSS} If there is an *X* that is both 'what is' and 'not what is', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge. [9, 10]
{12LSS} If *X* is that by which we are able to do things, then *X* is a faculty.
{13LSS} If *X* and *Y* are faculties, *X* and *Y* are different if and only if both (i) *X* and *Y* are over different things and (ii) *X* and *Y* accomplish different things.
{14LSS} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* are over different things, then *X* and *Y* accomplish different things. [implicit]
{15LSS} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* accomplish different things, then *X* and *Y* are over different things. [implicit]
{16LSS} Belief is that by which we are able to believe.
So, {17LSS} Belief is a faculty. [12, 16]
{18LSS} Knowledge is a faculty.
{19LSS} Knowledge does not make mistakes.
{20LSS} Belief makes mistakes.
So, {21LSS} Belief and knowledge accomplish different things. [19, 20]
So, {22LSS} Belief and knowledge are over different things. [15, 17, 18, 21]
So, {23LSS} Knowledge and belief are different faculties. [13, 21, 22]
So, {24LSS} Belief is not over sense-perceptible objects. [7, 22]
{25LSS} Belief is over something.
{26LSS} If belief is over something, then belief is not over nothing.
So, {27LSS} Belief is not over nothing. [25, 26]
{28LSS} Nothing is nothing.
So, {29LSS} Belief is not over nothing. [27, 28]
{30LSS} Ignorance is over nothing. [8]
{31LSS} Ignorance is a faculty. [implicit]
So, {32LSS} Belief and ignorance are different faculties. [13, 14, 15, 17, 29, 30, 31]
So, {33LSS} Belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge. [23, 32]
{34LSS} Belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge.
{35LSS} Belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance.
{36LSS} If (i) belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge and (ii) belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge and (iii) belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance, then belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [implicit]
So, {37LSS} Belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [34, 35, 36]
So, {38LSS} If there is something that is both 'what is' and 'not what is', then belief is over it. [11, 37]
{39LSS} All the many beautiful sense-perceptible objects appear ugly and beautiful.
{40LSS} All the many just sense-perceptible objects appear unjust and just.
{41LSS} All the many holy sense-perceptible objects appear unholy and holy.
{42LSS} All the many double sense-perceptible objects appear half and double.
{43LSS} All the many large sense-perceptible objects appear small and large.
{44LSS} All the many small sense-perceptible objects appear large and small.
{45LSS} All the many light sense-perceptible objects appear heavy and light.
{46LSS} All the many heavy sense-perceptible objects appear light and heavy.

So, {47LSS} All the sense-perceptible objects are 'to be' and 'not to be'. [39–46]
So, {48LSS} Belief is over all the sense-perceptible objects. [38LSS, 47LSS]

But the conjunction of {48LSS}, {7LSS}, and {22LSS} form a contradiction, so the LSS version of the Argument is invalid.

To be more precise, the argument against the lovers of sights and sounds has the following logical structure:

(I) {LSSA1}, {LSSA2}, and {LSSA3}.

(II) {1LSS}–{47LSS}.[108]

(III) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{6LSS}, then {7LSS}.

(IV) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{21LSS}, then {22LSS}.

(V) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{47LSS}, then {48LSS}.

(VI) If {7LSS} and {48LSS}, then ~{22LSS}.

(VII) {22LSS} and ~{22LSS}.

(VIII) Therefore, ~{LSSA1}.

Of course, (VIII) is not the only logically possible conclusion to draw from the inconsistency of (VII). It is, however, the one most likely to be drawn by Plato in the context of the Argument both because he thinks {LSSA2} and {LSSA3} are true and {LSSA1} is false and because Part Two provides the lovers of sights and sounds with some reason to identify the objects of belief with sense-perceptible objects whereas they lack similar evidence for {LSSA1}. The brief description of the objects of knowledge given in the Argument is not necessarily for the benefit of the lovers of sights and sounds. At the end of the Argument, the lovers of sights and sounds are probably not convinced that there are forms. The description of the forms as "the

108. Interpret this to mean the conjunction of the premises (and conclusions) {1LSS}, . . . , {47LSS}. The lovers of sights and sounds accept the members of this conjunction either as assumptions or as conclusions inferred from assumptions. The terms formed by "–" in (III), (IV), and (V) should be similarly understood.

*F*s themselves" can be understood as aimed at another audience, which could be the interlocutors of the dialogue, the readers of the dialogue, or both. It is after all the readers to whom the dialogue as a whole is directed, and we are the ones who are to learn something from the Argument. In particular, we learn that the account of forms is consistent with what is agreed to about knowledge and belief in the Argument.

C. To "Soothe and Gently Persuade" by Disguise

Most interpretations of the Argument since Gosling, and especially since Fine, have addressed the issue of the "dialectical requirement."[109] It has been explained in a number of ways. One generic description of it is given by Annas: the dialectical requirement is the requirement that Plato argue on grounds his opponents accept.[110] Others have tried to be more specific: that Plato must not use any *terms* that the lovers of sights and sounds cannot understand,[111] or that Plato must not use any *premises* that the lovers of sights and sounds would not consider to be true,[112] or both.[113] Of course, there are variations within each of these positions. Perhaps the

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109. The term "dialectical requirement" was first coined by Fine, but the concept was first emphasized in recent years by Gosling. Prior to Gosling it is mentioned briefly in Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's* Republic, 105.
110. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 195. See also N. P. White, *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, 106n9; and Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings*, 62: "Plato's argument must be constructed within the intellectual universe of the sightseers and craft-lovers, using materials they are prepared to countenance. It cannot use forms, or truths about them, without begging the question."
111. Benitez, "*Republic* 476d6–e2," 523.
112. Fine, e.g., says that no premise in the argument should "appeal to Forms," and the argument itself should not "begin with any claims the sightlovers would readily dispute" or with any claims they would be "unfamiliar with" ("Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 87). Stokes also puts the emphasis on premises rather than terms; see Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 271: "The 'philosopher' cannot legitimately employ premisses of his own, let alone those of Socrates or Plato; he should base his argument on premisses acceptable to his opponent."
113. Gosling, "*Doxa* and *Dynamis* in Plato's *Republic*," 121: "The fact is that the argument from 476d8 onwards must be conducted in terms that a *philotheamôn* could be held to understand, and from premises that it is reasonable to suppose he might admit." Earlier Gosling states, "the argument from 476d8 onwards is directed at the *philotheamones*, and the conclusions are drawn from admissions it is supposed they would make (cf. 476e4–8, 478e7–479b2). The argument is directed to them to soothe their indignation at being described as only having *doxa*, and a separate argument is *needed* because they have just been described as incapable of appreciating the distinction between Forms and *ta metechonta* (476c2–7) in terms of which they were declared *doxazontes* earlier" (ibid., 120–

strongest is that the terms or premises must be ones that both Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds accept, where *acceptance* means either that the terms are considered to be true or that they are considered uncontroversial.[114] A slightly weaker variation is that the terms or premises do not have to be ones that Plato accepts, only ones that the lovers of sights and sounds accept.[115] A weaker position than this holds that the terms or premises must be ones with which the lovers of sights and sounds are familiar.[116]

If we examine the text of the *Republic*, one point that is immediately obvious is that the amount of space in the secondary literature devoted to the dialectical requirement belies the number of lines Plato devotes to it in the *Republic*. He simply says, "Then what if this man is harsh with us—because we say that he believes but does not know—and disputes what we say as if it's not true? Will we have some way to soothe and gently persuade him, disguising from him that he is not healthy?" (476d7–e2). This statement does not introduce a distinction between terms and premises, nor does it say anything about using only terms or premises that the lovers of sights and sounds accept.

The treatment of the dialectical requirement in the secondary literature is curious because interpreters often assume that the dialectical requirement is unique to the Argument—and a few

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1). Later Gosling says the dialectical requirement means that "no substantial Platonic theses [can be] smuggled into the argument" (ibid., 125).

Irwin thinks that, at least with respect to *Meno* 75d, the dialectical requirement holds that a questioner must appeal only to properties the respondent can observe (*Plato's Ethics*, 163, 265), but as Benitez points out ("*Republic* 476d6–e2," 522) the context has nothing to do with properties. In his earlier *Plato's Moral Theory*, Irwin holds that the dialectical requirement applies to terms and predicates (136–44).

114. See, e.g., Cooper, "Between Knowledge and Ignorance," 233; and Berman, "Socrates and Callicles on Pleasure," 126n18. This is the majority view.

115. See, e.g., Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 289. Stokes argues that Plato does not agree with the lovers of sights and sounds about the truth of the premises and conclusions of the Argument and that, because of this disagreement, Plato does not accept the conclusions of the Argument. With respect to the question of whether Plato *agrees* with the lovers of sights and sounds about the truth of the Argument, the present interpretation is sympathetic to a degree with Stokes's. The present interpretation holds that Plato agrees with the lovers of sights and sounds about the meaning of some but not all of the premises and conclusions. However, since Plato's version of the Argument is one that he obviously accepts, the present interpretation runs contrary to Stokes's claim that Plato does not accept the conclusions of the Argument.

116. See, e.g., Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 87.

other places in the corpus such as the *Meno*—without explaining how it differs from Socrates' method of proceeding only on the basis of claims with which his interlocutors agree, not to mention his injunction that his interlocutors say only what they believe.[117] In fact, if the dialectical requirement is put in terms of not arguing on grounds that one's opponents do not accept, it is difficult to see how it differs from an important part of the usual Socratic procedures. But if the dialectical requirement is part of Socrates' typical methodology, it does not seem to fit the context of the Argument. Plato's desire to "soothe and gently persuade" the lover of sights and sounds while "disguising from him that he is not healthy" seems to be a kind of consideration that has, so far in the *Republic* at least, *not* been a matter of concern, so the dialectical requirement of the Argument is something different from Socrates' customary way of arguing, which means it is something other than arguing only on grounds that one's opponents accept.

If the distinctiveness of the Argument's methodology does not lie in arguing only on grounds that one's opponents accept, perhaps what is unique to the Argument is the notion of *disguise*. Commentators may be reluctant to emphasize this because the language of "disguising" (*epikruptomenoi*, "concealing") sounds as if Plato, the arch antisophist, is resorting to sophistry. It should be clear, however, from the reconstructions above that the disguise Plato employs concerns the meaning of '*einai*.' On the one hand, the lovers of sights and sounds accept {LSSA1}, that if something is 'that which is', then it is a sense-perceptible object. On the other hand, Plato accepts {PA1}, that if something is 'that which is', then it is a form. The ambiguity of the word '*einai*' disguises what Plato takes to be the true nature or constituents of reality and

117. See, e.g., *Crito* 48b, *Prot*. 332b, and *Gorg*. 495a.

allows the lovers of sights and sounds to make assumptions and agree to premises that ultimately undermine their claim to be called "philosophers."

The nature of Plato's disguise is bound to raise questions about the logical validity of the Argument. Since we claim that Part One trades on the ambiguous use of '*einai*,' a student of logic is bound to question whether the present interpretation commits Plato to the fallacy of equivocation. (Whether the mistake is conscious or unconscious makes little difference to the Argument's validity.) Benitez, for example, argues that interpretations that depend upon an indeterminate use of '*einai*' involve a fallacy because "at some point . . . the argument must employ a more determinate sense of *on*, and as soon as it does, it commits a fallacy—an indeterminate use of a term does not imply any particular determinate use."[118]

However, the present interpretation does not claim that Plato's use is indeterminate, only ambiguous. Hence, he does not commit the fallacy of equivocation in his use of '*einai*.' What is occluded by the ambiguity are the two uses of '*einai*,' one belonging to Plato and another to the lovers of sights and sounds. The latter's adoption of a specific use makes *their version* of the Argument inconsistent while Plato's version escapes that difficulty.

In this respect the Argument is consistent with the *Republic*'s extension of argumentative method beyond the typical Socratic elenchus. In a Socratic elenchus, the interlocutor gives an answer to the What is it? question. The interlocutor's answer is tested against other beliefs that he or she expresses about the definiendum, and the answer and the other beliefs are shown to be contradictory. Socrates thinks he has successfully refuted an opponent not by defending, or even comparing, his own definition of something (justice, for example) against his opponent's but by showing how his opponent's position is self-contradictory.

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118. Benitez, "*Republic* 476d6–e2," 532.

In the *Republic* as a whole, Plato attempts to do more than show that his opponents hold contradictory beliefs. Many points about the argumentative method he introduces in the *Republic* are worth exploring, but we will mention only the well known allegation that Plato's defense of justice is fallacious because the Platonic conception of justice is of an entirely different kind of thing than what the interlocutors of book 1 have in mind.[119] Thrasymachus, for example, thinks that justice is the advantage of the stronger, but Plato argues that justice is a different kind of thing altogether, namely, a certain kind of harmony. To argue for this conclusion is not fallacious, though it may appear to be. Similarly, from Plato's point of view the lovers of sights and sounds are mistaken about the kinds of things they are talking about when they talk about the objects of belief and knowledge. They incorrectly assume that the objects of knowledge are sense-perceptible objects.

But just as it is no fallacy to show that justice is not the kind of thing the critics think it is, so it is no fallacy to begin with agreement that knowledge and belief are different faculties and then show that the lovers of sights and sounds are mistaken about what they think the objects of belief are.[120] To see why this is innocuous consider more closely the argument between Socrates and the others as an example of an argument that turns on a disagreement about the terms involved in that argument. Consider how we might argue about whether being just is advantageous (whether with respect to this or that, or *tout court*) if we say that justice is the advantage of the stronger but our opponents say that justice is each part doing its own work. It is

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119. See Sachs, "A Fallacy in Plato's *Republic*"; Demos, "A Fallacy in Plato's *Republic*?"; Vlastos, "Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*"; Kraut, "Reason and Justice in Plato's *Republic*"; Sartorius, "Fallacy and Political Radicalism in Plato's *Republic*"; and Annas, "Plato and Common Morality."

120. Penner claims that any interpretation of *Rep*. 5 "must explain why Plato's treatment of knowledge and belief in the [*Rep*.] seems so blatantly to ignore the distinction between true and false opinion" (Penner, *The Ascent from Nominalism*, 378n49). The interpretation given here explains Plato's inattention to the distinction between true and false belief by arguing that the point of the argument is to specify (identify, point out) the *objects* of belief. Since the focus is, in an important but not exclusive sense, on the objects of belief, there is no need for Plato to discuss the issue of whether one could be mistaken in one's beliefs about the objects of belief.

possible that we could call our conception of justice "justice$_1$" and our opponents' conception "justice$_2$." Then we could pursue two different questions: Is justice$_1$ advantageous? Is justice$_2$ advantageous?

We might choose to argue this way, but Plato certainly does not.[121] The argumentative strategy followed in the *Republic* is not to accept two accounts of justice but to insist first on there being one correct account and then to investigate whether the correct account of justice entails that justice is advantageous or not.[122] This is in keeping with the procedure assumed at 596a: there is *one* form—justice, for example—in virtue of which all the instances of justice are properly called just. If we failed to agree about what justice is, this account would be frustrated because we could not refer each of the instances of justice to one thing only. In Cherniss's terms, the "philosophical economy" of the account would be compromised.[123]

This overall strategy is also adopted in the Argument, albeit with one significant modification. First, just as in the *Republic* as a whole there is a dispute about what "justice" really means or refers to, so in the Argument there is a dispute about what the meaning of '*einai*' is. And just as in the *Republic* Plato does not settle for giving two accounts of justice so in the Argument he does not *ultima facie* approve two different accounts of '*einai*.'

The significant modification of the overall strategy is that whereas in the *Republic* the disagreement about justice is manifest to all, in the Argument the fact that there is a dispute

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121. One reason why Plato does not argue in this way is given by Stewart: "Since it was not Plato's practice in the dialogues to ask questions of the kind 'What does "x" mean?', *eo ipso* it was not his practice to ask whether 'x' means two things rather than one. His definition-questions were of the kind 'What is x?', which led him when necessary to distinguish kinds of x; but one can do that only if 'x' is univocal, for otherwise they are not kinds of the same thing at all. Modern definition-questions tend to be asked of words, which can be regarded on occasion, with perfect propriety, as equivocal. Since ancient and modern conceptions of definition are based on incompatible assumptions, then, translators and commentators who have Plato ask semantic questions, when there is nothing like a semantic method in his answers, are only imposing gratuitous confusions" ("Plato's Sophistry," 35).
122. This procedure is most explicit in the *Meno*. Plato insists that we must first discover what virtue is before we can hope to acquire knowledge about it. In the face of Meno's resistance to this Plato introduces the method of hypothesis.
123. Cherniss, "The Philosophical Economy of the Theory of Ideas."

between Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds about the meaning of '*einai*' is not brought to the attention of the latter party. As noted above, Part One is carefully designed to avoid any specification of the objects of knowledge. The reason for this is dialectical: if the lovers of sights and sounds were to think that *to on* is a form, they would object to the Argument from its outset. Plato hides from them their mistake about the true nature of *to on* in order to "soothe and gently persuade" them to give up their claim to be philosophers.

D. Plato's Commitment to the Argument

As noted in section V.C above, there is disagreement about whether Plato accepts the terms and premises—and therefore the conclusions—of the Argument.[124] Although the typical accounts of the dialectical requirement are misguided, it is still worthwhile to ask why there is a reconstruction of the Argument consistent with Plato's own position. After all, if the goal of the Argument is simply to refute the lovers of sights and sounds, the LSS version suffices.

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124. Most commentators have argued or assumed that Plato accepts the premises and conclusions of the Argument. Stokes is among the few who do not. He argues that the dialectical requirement absolves Plato of any dubious conclusions reached by the Argument (Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 289), and he adopts this position in large part because he thinks the premises and conclusions of the Argument are at odds with the positions Plato espouses later in the *Rep*. But Stokes's reconstruction of the Argument suffers from anachronism. According to Stokes, Plato deliberately employs an existential use of '*einai*' in order to produce contradictory statements such as the following: (S) If there is a thing such that it both exists and does not exist, it would lie between the purely existent and the utterly nonexistent. Because, says Stokes, the antecedent is a contradiction the consequent can be anything whatsoever. But this is logical anachronism. The issue is not just a question of whether this argument violates the usual conception of the dialectical requirement—though it seems that it might, for why should Stokes think that the lovers of sights and sounds are familiar with the principle of explosion?—but whether this argument could plausibly be Plato's or anyone else's in Plato's time. It seems a stretch to say that the Argument relies on the principle of explosion since not even Aristotle seems committed to the principle. In *Pr. Anal.* Aristotle says that some syllogisms with inconsistent premises are valid, but some are not. ("Consequently it is possible that opposites may lead to a conclusion, though not always or in every mood, but only if the terms subordinate to the middle are such that they are either identical or related as whole to part. Otherwise it is impossible; for the propositions cannot anyhow be either contraries or opposites" (*Pr. Anal.* 64a15, trans. J. L. Ackrill)). Since specific things, not just anything whatsoever, must follow in the former case, Stokes should not hope that (S) falls under the former. But even if this part of the Argument were one of those Aristotle does not consider valid, it is not the case that Aristotle (*a fortiori* Plato) thought that anything *followed* from an argument with inconsistent premises. The fact that that possibility is never raised in Aristotle suggests that in the latter case he thought that *nothing* could come of an argument with inconsistent premises. Hence, Stokes's reading of the Argument should be rejected, and his claim that Plato cannot be committed to it should be rejected, too.

Apart from the obvious fact that the Platonic version must be part of a faithful reconstruction of the text because the text includes {49}–{55}, the answer is that the Platonic version of the Argument shows that on the hypothesis that forms exist, knowledge and belief are possible. The same cannot be said on the contrary hypothesis. If we are, as both Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds are, committed to the reality of knowledge and belief, then the difference between the two versions of the Argument is significant. The significance lies primarily in the fact that the Argument is one of the initial steps of Plato's deployment in the *Republic* of what we can call his rationalist methodology. Although we will have more to say about this methodology in a later chapter, it will be helpful to outline the main points now.

As a thesis about knowledge, rationalism is committed to theses about both the object and subject of knowledge. The subject of knowledge is usually taken to be the intellect or mind; in the *Republic* it is referred to as '*nous*' (526b) or '*to logistikon*' (439d). The objects of knowledge are unchanging, eternal, perfect, complete, simple, non-sensible entities. In the *Republic* these are the forms, which are characterized as the one over the many (596a6–7), themselves by themselves (476b10, 479a1, 479e1, 480a11)—by this Plato seems to mean that they are separate from and nonidentical with sensibles—changeless (485b2–3, 479a2–3), and non-sensible (524c).

Since the objects of knowledge are not the objects of everyday experience, obtaining knowledge of them requires (i) an initial commitment to their existence despite an ignorance of their exact nature[125] and (ii) a specific method of philosophical education, one that leads the student to rely on the intellect, not the senses.[126] Aristotle's statements about proceeding from what is better known to us to what is better known by nature express this kind of philosophical

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125. Cf. *Rep*. 533a: "'You will no longer be able to follow, my dear Glaucon,' I said, 'although there wouldn't be any lack of eagerness on my part. But you would no longer be seeing an image of what we are saying, but rather the truth itself, at least as it looks to me. *Whether it is really so or not can no longer be properly insisted on. But that there is some such thing to see must be insisted on.* Isn't it so?' 'Of course'" (emphasis added).
126. See, e.g., *Rep*. 524d–525a.

method.[127] According to the rationalist, what we think of as real when we begin to philosophize (or even before we philosophize) is not as real as what is known to us after we adequately philosophize. The obvious difficulty the rationalist has in persuading others is that the goal of philosophizing—which is often taken to be seeing and contemplating the truth, not with the sense of sight but with the *nous* (532a–c)—is to show that the objects of knowledge are not those of everyday experience.

The Argument is a model of one way a rationalist can start to argue against empiricist opponents: he can hide *his view* about the nature of the objects of knowledge from the empiricist.[128] He does this by using terminology that the empiricist will interpret in a way that leads to a dilemma even as the terminology remains open to a rationalist interpretation that does not lead to a similar dilemma. On the model the Argument provides, the empiricist's dilemma must be faced after the empiricist concludes that he cannot account for knowledge at all. He must choose to either give up his claim to knowledge or admit that sensible objects are not the proper objects of knowledge. The latter option is more appealing if the rationalist can demonstrate the possibility of knowledge, but the former option might be inevitable if the interest in sensibles is ingrained in the soul. In this respect, the Argument has the effect of an elenchus, but it is an argument the likes of which students of the Socratic dialogues have never seen because simultaneous with the refutation of the lovers of sights and sounds, Plato advances a positive argument showing that knowledge is possible on the hypothesis that forms exist. Again, comparison with the *Republic* as a whole is helpful: book 1 ends just as a Socratic dialogue

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127. See *Meta*. 1029b2–12; *Phys*. 184a16–20; *Post*. *Anal*. 71b33–a5.
128. In the context of the Argument, the "empiricists" are not necessarily philosophical empiricists; they are commonsense empiricists, people of "good sense." But the Argument also works against philosophical empiricists.

normally does, but books 2–10 mark a new direction[129] in Plato's thought because they argue (nonelenctically) for substantive conclusions about the nature and effects of justice.

Because Plato is committed to the Platonic version of the Argument, the Argument marks a *beginning* of an argument for rationalism. It cannot by itself lead the newly converted empiricist to a vision of the truth, nor does it give any direct support for the truth of {PA1}–{PA4}. In this respect, it can be contrasted with both "Diotima's ladder" from the *Symposium* and the philosophical education Plato describes in *Republic* 7: the Argument is not a gradual ascent from a rudimentary sensory awareness of the empirical world to a mental vision of the purely ideal reality. The Argument is more like a description of the first step the one who returns to the cave must take to set the prisoners free. The chained inhabitants of the cave take the shadows in the cave to be real; the first thing the philosopher must do is persuade them that this is not the case. The Argument is designed not to turn the lovers of sights and sounds into philosophers but to persuade them that their nominalism and empiricism are dead ends for knowledge.[130]

VI. Conclusion

The Argument is designed to show the lovers of sights and sounds—those who are nominalists, empiricists, and in love with beautiful sense-perceptible objects—that they are mistaken about the objects of knowledge. They think that the objects of what Plato calls "belief" are the objects of knowledge. Plato's presentation of the Argument includes an intentionally ambiguous use of '*einai*' in order to demonstrate to the lovers of sights and sounds that although

129. Or, if we think of the *Meno* as introducing this new direction, the *Rep*. extends the new method further than any previous dialogue.
130. The general strategy of the Argument has a legacy lasting to the present day. Antiempiricists (or nonnaturalists) often argue against empiricism (naturalism) on the grounds that it cannot account for, say, *a priori* knowledge.

Plato's account of the objects of knowledge and belief is consistent, theirs is not. The best interpretation of the Argument recognizes that this means there are two arguments, one that works with Plato's understanding of '*einai*' and another that does the same for the lovers of sights and sounds. Plato's overarching purpose in using such ambiguity is to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds to give up their claim to the title "philosopher" by circumventing their aversion to the language of Platonic realism.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARGUMENT: PART ONE

I. Introduction

Knowledge and its concomitants, belief and ignorance, form a complicated set of topics, and there are many aspects of that set that deserve sustained examination. The Argument, however, invites us to focus on two things: (i) the relation between the subject and the object of knowledge and (ii) the differences between knowledge, belief, and, to a lesser extent, ignorance. Even Plato's views on these two topics, however, have the potential to create volumes, and so we must be selective in our discussion. This chapter takes up these two topics as a large part of its explanation of Part One of the Argument, but there are two preliminary points to note before turning to an analysis of the text.

First, it will become clear that discussion below does not follow the typical pattern of first criticizing the various interpretive hypotheses concerning Plato's use of '*einai*' in the Argument and then defending one (or more) of the interpretations as preferable. The reason for bucking this long-standing approach to the Argument was stated in chapter 1: The Argument is essentially two arguments in parallel, the LSS version and the Platonic version, and this reading removes the impetus for finding a reading of '*einai*' on which Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds *agree*.

Secondly, some arguments in this chapter depend upon the important assumption that Plato's discussions of knowledge and belief in the *Republic* are generally consistent with each other. This is not a controversial position, though it is not without its detractors.[1] The present

1. Annas, in particular, is critical of the view that Plato's statements on knowledge in the *Rep*. are coherent; see *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 230, 234, 256, 322–3. For a defense of the view that Plato's views are generally consistent throughout the *Rep*., see Rowe ("Plato on Knowing and Merely Believing," 59), and Reeve ("Blindness and Reorientation"). N. P. White (*A Companion to Plato's* Republic, 116, 156) makes the good point that there are places in the *Rep*. (e.g., 428a–429a) where Plato uses '*epistêmê*' in a way that is looser than the technical discussions in books 5–7. (E.g., "One should always bear in mind that his distinction between *epistêmê* and *doxa* (belief or

interpretive hypothesis concerning the Argument holds that the Platonic version of the Argument involves Plato's views about metaphysics and epistemology, at least as far as they are stated in the *Republic*. Plato's views are either the ground of or expressed in the individual premises and conclusions of the Platonic version of the Argument, which means that when we come to an analyses of, say, {6P} and{16P} we must explain what knowledge and belief are on Plato's view in order to give a sufficiently comprehensive account of the Argument.

II. Part One

Taken as a whole, Part One establishes both the Platonic and the LSS versions of the following important conclusions:

{7} Knowledge is over 'that which is';

{22} Knowledge and belief are over different things; and

{38} If there is something that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it.

It is important to note the difference between {7} and {38}: that there is something that knowledge is over (*epi*) is established; that there is something that belief is over is not.[2] Thus, the goal of Part One is to establish that *if* belief is over something, what it is over is both 'to be' and 'not to be'. It remains for Part Two to first secure agreement that there is a kind of thing, namely, sense-perceptible objects, over which belief is set, and then to draw the conclusions from this concerning the true distinction between philosophers and the lovers of sights and sounds.

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opinion) was not intended as an attempt to reflect ordinary or actual usage of those terms" (ibid., 116). So when I say that Plato's concept of knowledge expressed in the *Rep*. is more or less consistent, I am speaking about his expressions of his refined or philosophical concept of knowledge and, for that matter, belief (*doxa*). Despite the soundness of White's point, there is, I think, more continuity between commonsense notions of knowledge and belief and Plato's refined notions of the same than White's statements might suggest.

2. Gonzalez rightly criticizes Fine for neglecting the conditional nature of {38}; see Gonzalez, "Propositions or Objects?" 247, 250–1.

A. {1}–{8}: What Knowledge and Ignorance Are Epi

(1) The Argument of {A}

{1} Knowledge is over [*epi*] either something or nothing.
{2} Knowledge is over something.
{3} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over 'that which is' or over 'that which not is'.
So, {4} Knowledge is either over 'that which is' or over 'that which not is'. [implicit; 2, 3]
{5} Knowledge is not over 'that which not is'.
So, {6} Knowledge is over 'that which is'. [4, 5]
So, {7} Knowledge is over 'that which completely is'. [6]
{8} Ignorance is over 'that which completely not is'.

Call this fragment of the Argument "{A}." Plato's goal in {A} is to establish {7} and {8}. The former is reached by way of an argument, the premises of which are explicit, with the exception of {4}. Contrary to the argument for {7}, there is no argument for {8}. It is assumed, as is the truth of {1}, {2}, {3}, and {5}. The only real obstacle to the validity of {A} is the inference from {6} to {7}, but we argue below in section 4 that Plato does not commit any logical fallacies in making this inference because once the Argument is examined it is relatively clear that Plato intends {6} and {7} to be identical.

Since on the interpretive hypothesis spelled out in chapter 1 (section IV.B.2) 'that which is' is ambiguous, each of the premises involving 'that which is' has two readings. The two possible readings of {3} (where "P" indicates the reading according to Plato's point of view concerning the referent of '*einai*,' and "LSS" indicates the reading according to the lovers of sights and sounds):

{3P} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over the forms or over nothing.

{3LSS} If knowledge is over something, then knowledge is either over sense-perceptible objects or over nothing.

The readings for {4} and {6} can be similarly constructed:

{4P} Knowledge is either over the forms or over nothing.

{6P} Knowledge is over the forms.

{7P} Knowledge is over the forms.

{8P} Ignorance is over nothing.

{4LSS} Knowledge is either over sense-perceptible objects or over nothing.

{6LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects.

{7LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects.

{8LSS} Ignorance is over nothing.

(2) Epi

One significant issue raised by {A} is the nature of the relation expressed by '*epi*.'[3] Because in the Argument Plato only states that knowledge is *epi* 'what is', commentators have questioned whether '*epi*' indicates a relation between a power (*dynamis*) and its object—call this kind of relation a formal relation, and an object of a power a formal object—or an intentional relation between a cognitive state and the intentional object of that state—where "intentional object" should be understood in a broad sense that connotes an object of thought, that which a cognitive state is *of* or *about*.[4] On the first option, the relation is not necessarily limited to human faculties but could also apply to, say, the power of heat to melt solids; in Plato's terminology, if

3. I do not wish to put the emphasis here on the word '*epi*' (with the dative) but on the concept expressed by it. At 534a2–3, Plato uses '*peri*' (with the accusative) to describe the relation between (*a*) knowledge (*noêsin*) and being (*ousian*) and (*b*) belief (*doxan*) and coming-to-be (*genesin*) (534a3). Thus, '*epi*' and '*peri*' seem to be for the most part interchangeable, though Plato's preferred expression is '*epi*' with the dative. One important difference between the two uses is that '*epi*' is often used with verbs of purpose or accomplishment whereas in the *Rep*. '*peri*' is never used with such verbs; see the appendix for details.
4. See, e.g., Smith, "Plato on Knowledge as a Power," 148.

this application were appropriate, heat would be *epi* solid objects.[5] On the second option, '*epi*' expresses a relation that holds only between cognitive states and intentional objects.

Which of the two relations Plato intends to express by '*epi*' is unclear. The fact that later in the Argument (477c–d) he argues that knowledge is *epi* only 'that which is' suggests that the relation is not an intentional one because the reasons Plato provides to limit the scope of knowledge to 'that which is' do not take into account the *prima facie* possibility that one can *believe* certain things about 'that which is', for example, that 'that which is' is unchangeable or that the true nature of 'that which is' is beyond one's grasp.[6] Plato's lack of consideration of this or similar points suggests that he does not intend to express the relation of intentionality by '*epi*.' Moreover, the examples of sight and hearing given in the Argument (477c) and the analogy in

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5. In what follows, we will treat faculties as one kind of power and leave it an open question whether Plato thinks there are powers that are not faculties. For further discussion of this point, see chapter 5.

6. Socrates states later, e.g., that he does not want to share his beliefs about the good (506c6–9). Some (e.g., Smith, "Plato on Knowledge as a Power," 154; Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 86) have taken this as a sign that, contrary to what Plato says in the Argument, there *can* be beliefs about the forms. Fine, Smith, and others have likewise pointed out that at 520c4 Plato says that the philosophers returning to the cave are told "you'll know [*gnôsesthe*] what each of the phantoms is," where the phantoms stand for sense-perceptible objects. Gonzalez has a plausible explanation of these passages ("Propositions or Objects?" 272–3) that is based on the relation between the forms and sense-perceptible objects. He says, "when Socrates claims to have only *doxa* concerning the good, he means that he is in some sense confined to sensible images (such as the sun) in his understanding of the good, that the good is *not* a direct, explicit object of his cognition" (ibid.). (One correction to Gonzalez's point needs to be made: it is incorrect to say that Socrates is confined to sensible images in his "understanding" of the good, unless "understanding" means simply "thinking.") That is, despite appearances to the contrary, Socrates is not talking about a form here. He is talking about the sun and only about the good as understood through the image (likeness) of the sun, that is, importantly, not the good *simpliciter*, or as Plato says, not the good itself. Note that the whole discussion of "the good" is prefaced by the instruction to "say that the sun is the offspring of the good I mean—an offspring the good begot in proportion with itself . . ." (508b–c). Socrates continues to emphasize this point at 509a when he tells Glaucon to study the image of the good more. The basis of all the comments from 508b–509c about the good—or, more precisely, the good as understood through the image of the sun—is its resemblance to the sun. We find comparisons of the eyes with the soul, light and sight with truth and knowledge, the generation caused by the sun with the generation caused by the good, and, obviously, the sun with the good. (Note also that Glaucon says what Socrates is describing by means of the image is an "inconceivable" (*amêchanos*, 509a) beauty. Literally, according to Glaucon, the beauty of "the good," which is being described through the image of the sun, does not permit one the possibility of managing or understanding it.) Thus, at 509c, Socrates is not making statements about the good but about the good as understood through the image of the sun; cf. 533a. And clearly the sun, which is a physical object, is an object of opinion rather than knowledge.

In any case, Sedley's position is also quite sensible: "this [the appeal to *Rep*. 520c et al.] is weak evidence [against the two-worlds thesis] because Socrates is here engaged in using the idiom of the cave simile . . . , and not his preferred epistemological vocabulary. In a more technical passage such as 484c–d, one that capitalizes directly on the Book 5 argument [the Argument], he seems careful to limit the good politician's 'knowledge' to that of Forms" ("Philosophy, the Forms, and the Art of Ruling," 260n6).

Republic 6 between sight, which is *epi* color (or colored things), and knowledge, which is *epi* the forms, indicates a relation between faculties and the proper objects of those faculties ("formal objects") and not an intentional relation.

On the other hand, some of the language of the Argument seems to be unmistakably intentional. In the Argument, Plato says, "[Isn't it] impossible to even believe 'that which not is'? Think. Does not the man who believes refer [*pherei*] the belief to [*epi*] something? Or is it possible to believe but believe nothing?" (478b5–7). The language of a person referring his or her belief to something indicates an intentional relation between a person's belief and the object of that particular belief.[7]

So what kind of relation does Plato refer to when he asserts that knowledge is *epi* 'that which is'? Because he does not separate the two relations from each other, it seems best to answer, "Neither." He seems to have in mind a single relation that combines aspects of the relation between faculties and formal objects and the relation between cognitive states and intentional objects.[8]

The features of this single relation are not evident in the Argument, but Plato provides some clues concerning them when he expounds his images of the sun and cave in *Republic* 6 and 7 (507a–509b, 514a–519b). Because his discussion of the faculties of sight and knowledge is

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7. Note that the masculine '*ho doxazôn*' does not refer to the faculties mentioned at 478a because '*dynameis*' (478a) is feminine.

8. One possible reason Plato does not make this distinction is that his conception of the soul/person differs from the conception under which the distinction was developed. Furthermore, this is consistent with what Aristotle says about the definition of belief: "in the case of relative terms, see if the species is rendered as relative to a species of that to which the genus is rendered as relative, e.g., supposing belief to be relative to some object of belief, see whether a particular belief is made relative to some particular object of belief: and, if a multiple be relative to a fraction, see whether a particular multiple be made relative to a particular fraction. For if it be not so rendered, clearly a mistake has been made" (*Topics*, 6.9, trans. Pickard-Cambridge). Aristotle insists that if belief is defined with reference to a specific kind of object then any particular belief must also be "made relative" to an object that falls under the kind of object by which belief (in general) is defined. This makes sense only if the relation between the species of belief and the kind of object by which it is defined is the same as the relation between particular instances of belief and particular objects of belief.

woven together with his discussion of education and the form of the good, it is not possible in this space to discuss all the details of these passages. The main point to make for present purposes is that, in Plato's view, in an act of knowing, the particular intentional object of the cognitive state produced by the faculty of knowledge is the same as the particular formal object of the faculty of knowledge. This much is plain from Plato's accounts of vision and knowledge. The identity of these two types of objects in an act of knowledge justifies Plato's use of '*epi*' as covering both kinds of relations.[9]

The main evidence for the claim stated above is the close parallel Plato draws between sight and knowledge. So let us start by setting out the relevant points of the analogy:

Sight	*Knowledge*
The part of us that sees what is seen is sight (507c).	The part of us that knows what is known is knowledge [implicit].
The objects of sight are colors (or colored things) (507d).	The objects of knowledge are the forms [implicit; 479e].
In the case of seeing and what is seen, a third thing is needed in order for sight to see and what is seen to be seen (507d).	In the case of knowing and what is known, a third thing is needed in order for knowledge to know and what is known to be known (508e).
The third thing is necessary because there are circumstances in which (the faculty of) sight is in the eyes and color is in what is seen but sight does not see and what is seen is not seen (507d–e).	The third thing is necessary because there are circumstances in which (the faculty of) knowledge is in the soul and the power of being known is in what is known but knowledge does not know and what is known is not known [implicit].

9. It is a further possibility that, according to Plato, a cognitive state "produced by" a faculty is really nothing but the *actualization* of that faculty. See Gerson, *Knowing Persons*, 155n7.

Sight	*Knowledge*
The third thing needed is light, whose nature is specifically directed to joining together the power of sight and the power of being seen (507e).	The third thing needed is truth, whose nature is specifically directed to joining together the power of knowledge and the power of being known [implicit].
The sun is the source of light (508a).	The good is the source of truth (508e).
Sight is naturally related to the sun in the following way: neither sight nor eyes (that in which sight comes to be) is the sun, but the eye is the most sunlike of the senses (508a–b).	Knowledge is naturally related to the good in the following way: neither knowledge nor the soul is the form of the good, but, of all the cognitive powers, the soul, or the part of the soul in which knowledge is, is most like the good (508e–509a).
The sun is not sight (508b).	The good is not knowledge (508e).
The sun is the cause of sight (508b).	The good is the cause of knowledge (508e).
Eyes do not see well (it even appears that sight is not in them) when they look at things at night (508c).	The soul does not see well (it even appears that knowledge is not in it) when it is directed toward what lacks truth (508d).
Eyes see clearly ("sight shows itself to be in" the eyes) when they look at things illuminated by the sun (508d).	The soul knows clearly (knowledge shows itself to be in the soul) when it is directed toward what is shown to be true by the good (508d).
Eyes need time to become accustomed to the true objects of sight, and until they do they are unable to see, that is, sight does not show itself to be in the eyes (516a).	The soul needs time to become accustomed to the true objects of knowledge, and until it does it is unable to know, that is, knowledge does not show itself to be in the soul (518a, c).

A number of the points in the analogy between sight and knowledge are relevant to Plato's explanation of the relation between cognitive states and their intentional objects and

faculties and the objects to which they are formally related. In particular, it is possible to discern three conditions that must be met in order for a cognitive state of knowledge to be produced: the knowledge faculty must be (i) directed to the right kind of (formal) object, (ii) accustomed to the objects of knowledge, and (iii) operating in circumstances in which no necessary correlating powers are absent.

One may recall Plato's frequent use of the idea that one could look, either visually or mentally, in the right direction yet be unable to see because that with which one looks is either overwhelmed or "dazzled" (*marmarugê*, 518b1) by that at which one looks (516a–b, 518a) or because that at which one looks is darker than that to which one is accustomed (517d, 518a). In the case of the philosopher who descends into the cave, what Plato says implies that the philosopher's faculty of knowledge has been adequately developed but the philosopher needs time to acquaint himself with the "shadows of the just" (517d8–9), that is, with the laws alleged to be just laws (cf. 484c–d), in order to make a correct judgment about them.

Thus, one way to think of cognitive states of knowledge is that they are *evidence* of the development of the faculty of knowledge. This is not to say that a cognitive state of knowledge is evidence that a faculty of knowledge exists; the reality of psychological faculties, knowledge among them, must be shown on other grounds. But if one accepts Plato's (more or less) faculty psychology account of knowledge, then a cognitive state of knowledge is good evidence that one's faculty of knowledge is developed. This seems to be a good way to interpret the claim that knowledge "shows itself" to be in the soul just as sight "shows itself" (*phainetai*, 508d1) to be in the eyes only under certain conditions. The faculties of knowledge and sight can be developed, but without being directed to the right objects under the right conditions, it is not evident that they are so.

If the first two conditions required to produce a cognitive state of knowledge are straightforward, one needs to take care in explicating the third. Annas, for example, says that, according to Plato, "sight is the most prominent of the senses that inform us about the world of experience, and it is also distinguished from the other senses by the fact that it needs a medium—light."[10] The language Plato uses, however, does not suggest that light is a *medium*, an intervening space or substance through which sight is transmitted.[11] What he says is that light is a *power* that enables both the eyes to see and the object of sight to be seen (507d–e). The notion of enabling recalls the description of powers Plato gives in book 5: "We say that *dynameis* are a certain kind of 'those which are' by which both we and everything else are able to do whatever we are able to do" (477c1–2).

To be more precise, in the passage on the image of the sun, Plato states that in some instances a "third thing" (*ho triton*, 507d1)—which turns out to be a power that correlates a faculty with its object—is needed to relate the faculty to its object so that the faculty can be actualized. In the case of hearing, for example, nothing in addition to hearing and sound is necessary for the one to hear and the other to be heard (507d). In fact, Plato says, most faculties are like this. In the case of sight and the thing seen, however, the correlating power required is light (507d–e). In general, correlating powers have "nature[s] . . . specifically directed to" the purpose of "yoking" (*zeugnumi*) the faculty and its object (507d–e).

The yoking metaphor, however, can be misleading if taken literally. The "third thing" does not stand between two things holding them together but rather gives to one of the relata a certain kind of power. For example, Plato says that the sun provides what is seen with the power

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10. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 245.
11. Furthermore, the physical explanation of light and perception expounded in the *Tim*. (45c–d) does not involve media.

(*dynamis*) of being seen (509b1–2); similarly, in addition to providing the faculty of knowledge with its power, the good provides what is known with the power of being known (508d). In these cases, the third thing couples two relata by providing one of them with a power to relate to the other.[12]

To summarize the three conditions: under suitable conditions of light (truth), the faculty of sight (knowledge) makes contact with a colored thing (form) and produces a cognitive state in which the colored thing (form) is in some way present in the consciousness of the one who possesses that faculty of sight (knowledge). Deficiencies of the cognitive state are attributed either to lack of or excess of light (truth) or to some unsuitability in the object.

If we think about these three conditions for producing a cognitive state of knowledge, it becomes apparent that the work that goes into acquiring, maintaining, and extending knowledge is at least partially devoted to getting the right kind of objects in view under the right conditions.[13] In the case of perception, simply getting the eyes into the right relation with colored objects produces a cognitive state of perception. There is no further action of will or choice needed. It turns out, however, that the same is not the case with knowledge. Although sight is more like a causal relation than an act, knowledge essentially involves discussion and argument, which require thought, effort, and, in a word, *action*.

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12. It is well known, from the *Phdo*., e.g., that Plato explains relations in terms of forms. He speaks of the equal itself (74a) and tallness itself (102d). Thus, explaining the relation between knowing and being known in terms of a form, the form of the good, is consistent with what appears to be his treatment of relations in general.

If we expand the concept of *dynamis* beyond faculties to a general account of powers, the idea that the correlated power could give a power to something else is only a special case of one power's being the ground of another. Justice is one of the clearest examples in the *Rep*. of a power that grounds other power. Plato says that justice "provided the power [*dynamis*] by which all these others [moderation, courage, and prudence] came into being; and, once having come into being, it provides them with preservation as long as it's in the city" (433b–c); cf. *Rep*. 433d. (This point about a hierarchy of powers is relevant to Plato's discussion of the division of powers in the *Phdrs*. 270ff.) In the case of justice, Plato verifies the foundational nature of its power vis-à-vis the other virtues by establishing that the other virtues could be explained in terms of justice but not the other way around.

13. See the next section on what Plato means when he speaks of "viewing" the objects of knowledge.

More importantly, according to Plato, the cognitive state produced in this way by the faculty of sight is *epi* the object of the faculty of sight, where, to be precise, "object" means a particular object related to the faculty in virtue of its being the right type of formal object. This is evident from Plato's distinction between perceptions that summon the intellect and perceptions that do not (523a–524d). According to that distinction, the objects taken in sensation can sometimes be "adequately distinguished by sense" (523b), sometimes not. The cause of the latter cases is that what sight "indicates" (523d) or "reveals" (523c) to the soul is insufficient for the soul to figure out what is represented to it through sight. Although it is not Plato's concern to spell out the nature of what we might call perceptual belief, one implication of this passage is that on a Platonic account of perceptual belief such a belief does not include "content" not given through perception. Only what is given in perception can be part of the perceptual belief.[14]

This last point is important because it rules out attempts to attribute to Plato a position on which the content of a perceptual belief may differ from that derived from the object that is *epi* the faculty.[15] On such a view, one's faculty of sight might make contact with Jones, for example, but the perceptual belief produced might be about Smith if, say, one takes oneself to be seeing Smith. This possibility, however, is ruled out by Plato's insistence that what the faculty of sight "reports to the soul" (524a2–3) contains nothing except what it perceives. There can be no content in the perceptual belief that is not produced by the perception. If there were, then Plato's claims about the reality of perceptions that summon thought could not have been established as

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14. As discussed in the next section, Plato does not say that sense perception provides an adequate basis for an adequate account of the things that do not summon the intellect. He only says that in cases where the object of sense perception is presented without its opposite, that sight can distinguish (*krinô*, 523b2) that object, which means that sight can determine that the object is not "con-fused" with its opposite. This point obviates much of Gonzalez's attempt to make sense of this passage in light of his commitment to the two-worlds theory by distinguishing between perceiving, e.g., the hardness or softness of an object and explaining what hardness and softness are; see Gonzalez, "Propositions or Objects?" 254–5.

15. See, e.g., Smith, "Plato on Knowledge as a Power," 148–9.

quickly as he thinks they can because such content might be used as the basis for a correct judgment about the nature of a particular object of perception without appealing to the intellect. Of course, it is possible on Plato's view to mistake Jones for Smith, but such a mistake involves more than the faculty of sight's report to the soul; it requires a separate exercise of the faculty of belief. On the Platonic account of perceptual belief, if on seeing Jones one forms the belief *that's Smith* the content of that belief cannot be produced by the faculty of sight alone because it is not in the content of the report sight makes to the soul.

By following the analogy between sight and knowledge, there will likewise be nothing in a cognitive state of knowledge that is not derived from the faculty's interaction with its object. Hence, the intentional object will be the same as the object that the faculty is *epi*.[16]

Returning to the Argument, we can say that Plato's claim that "knowledge is *epi* 'what is'" means (i) that the faculty of knowledge has the forms as members of its range of possible objects and (ii) that the cognitive state produced by the faculty of knowledge is also of or about the forms.[17]

Because the Argument is intended to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds, those who adopt the traditional interpretation of the dialectical requirement urge us to ask whether the

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16. Smith argues that there must be a distinction between the two relations because, if we examine the case of ignorance, "surely Plato did not mean to tell us that we could be ignorant only *of* or *about* nothing . . . . Rather, we are and can be ignorant of all sorts of things that are, and ignorant of all sorts of things that—to put it in Platonic terms—both are and are not" (ibid., 149). Here Smith uses the fact that we are and can be ignorant of all sorts of things that are as evidence for the distinction between the two relations, but his argument begs the question against Plato, who would deny that we are *in fact* or even could be ignorant of "things that are" because the faculty of ignorance is not *epi* such things. It is only on the *assumption* that the *epi* relation does not include the relation between cognitive states and intentional objects that Plato is mistaken about the things we can be ignorant about. Smith is, of course, entitled to assume that, but he cannot use what follows from that assumption as *evidence* that Plato thought that Smith's assumption about the *epi* relation is correct. (For a different response to Smith's claim, see Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 274–5.)

17. Although this account of Plato's use of '*epi*' in the Argument is consistent with the two-worlds account of Plato's epistemology, it does not entail that account.

lovers of sights and sounds agree with Plato about this use of '*epi*.'[18] Although the lovers of sights and sounds will not agree with Plato's conception of the nature of the formal and intentional objects, they do not have any difficulty accepting the use of '*epi*' in the Argument. Later in the *Republic*, Plato uses '*epi*' (again with the dative) in a way that suggests how the lovers of sights and sounds would understand it: "the sense [*aisthêsis*] *epi* the hard is also compelled to be *epi* the soft" (524a1–2). This statement indicates that there is an ordinary use of '*epi*' with the dative that both contains the ambiguity between formal and intentional objects noted above and is used in the context of sense-perception. Because Plato parallels this use in his discussion of knowledge and belief, the lovers of sights and sounds would have no trouble agreeing with it.

(3) Knowledge

Having established that "knowledge is *epi* 'what is'" means, according to Plato, that the faculty of knowledge has the forms as its formal objects and that the cognitive state produced by the faculty of knowledge is of or about the forms, it remains unclear what exactly Plato means by

18. Stokes, e.g., says that "the 'philosopher' cannot legitimately employ premisses of his own, let alone those of Socrates or Plato; he should base his argument on premisses acceptable to his opponent" (ibid., 271). Although I argue that the lovers of sights and sounds have no difficulty sharing Plato's use of '*epi*,' from the point of view of the present interpretation, it is not, strictly speaking, necessary to think that is true in order for the Argument to be successful. The only thing the lovers of sights need to do with respect to '*epi*' is avoid using it equivocally in the Argument, a point that can be generalized to the entire Argument. Because Plato intends the LSS version to be invalid, he does not need to concern himself with the truth values of the premises of the LSS version much less inquire about the meanings of terms employed in the LSS version. As long as the lovers of sights and sounds (i) genuinely accept the premises of the LSS version of Argument and (ii) do not equivocate on the meanings of the terms in their version of the Argument, the meanings of *all* those terms could be opaque to both Plato and us. (Equivocation would make the LSS version invalid, but that is not the cause of invalidity Plato wants to deploy because it would not achieve his goal of simultaneously showing the lovers of sights and sounds their mistake and demonstrating the more fruitful Platonic way; see chapter 4.) In particular, we do not have a good grasp on what they mean by "both 'what is' and 'not what is'," but this does not affect the present interpretation of the Argument. Now, it seems that in some significant cases we have a rather good idea about how the lovers of sights and sounds understand certain terms. For example, from Plato's characterization of them as devoted to sights and sounds, and from his contrast of them with philosophers who love the invisible forms, it seems certain enough that they understand 'that which is' as sense-perceptible objects. Similarly, they understand (i) 'that which not is' as nothing and (ii) instances of the phrase "the many *F* things"—beautiful things, just things, double things, and so on (479a–b)—to mean sense-perceptible objects.

'*epistêmê*' and '*gnôsis*' in the Argument.[19] The issue is of interest because although Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds agree to a number of characteristics of knowledge, there is no clear statement of what knowledge is.

Those attempting to fill in the blanks of the account of knowledge assumed in the Argument, and in the *Republic*, have resorted to a number of distinctions in order to clarify that account. Perhaps, some have thought, Plato thinks of knowledge as knowledge by acquaintance as distinct from knowledge by description, or perhaps the relevant distinction is between propositional knowledge ("knowledge-that") and knowledge of a thing's essence ("knowledge-what").[20] Some have even thought that the notion of "know-how" enters into the Platonic conception of knowledge.[21]

One difficulty of starting with these distinctions is that many of them originate from theoretical frameworks that are not Plato's. The Russellian distinction between acquaintance and description, for example, only makes sense if one first distinguishes things from true propositions, but it is, at least, not clear that Plato agrees with that distinction. (In the first place, it is not clear what a *proposition* would be in Plato's metaphysics.[22]) Another difficulty is that

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19. As noted in chapter 1 (section II.A), there is no evident distinction between '*epistêmê*' and '*gnôsis*' in the Argument. Despite Stokes's claim to the contrary ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 275–6) it is not clear that the lovers of sights and sounds would associate the latter more than the former with recognition and acquaintance; see *LSJ*, s.v., '*gnôsis*' (II.2–3) and '*epistêmê*.'

20. Cf. Penner, *The Ascent from Nominalism*, 110–11, 378n50. On propositional knowledge, see Gulley, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, 65–6. Stokes claims that the knowledge in question in the Argument is "knowledge . . . of a thing" ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 270). Fine, as a defender of the veridical interpretation of the Argument, thinks that the relevant kind of knowledge is knowledge-that; see Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 88–9.

21. See, e.g., Gould, *The Development of Plato's Ethics*, 7; and Vlastos, review of *The Development of Plato's Ethics*, 227–30. The traditional distinction between empirical and *a priori* knowledge says more about the nature of the objects of knowledge than about what knowledge itself is. So that distinction is unhelpful for present purposes. If, e.g., Plato thinks that knowledge is justified true belief, that has no necessary connection with the question of whether the objects of knowledge are empirical (sense-perceptible, physical, or whatever) or *a priori* (non-sense-perceptible, immaterial, or whatever).

22. After surveying the relevant passages in Plato, Nuchelmans concludes, "We may . . . conjecture that for [Plato] a *logos* was primarily of a concrete and individual character, a token rather than a type, if this modern distinction is applicable at all" (*Theories of the Proposition*, 21).

whatever distinction one uses to explain Plato's account of knowledge does not accurately identify what knowledge is according to Plato. For example, as noted above and discussed below, some of what Plato says about knowledge implicate knowledge-that; other passages implicate knowledge-what.[23]

If we take the previous discussion of '*epi*' as a clue, it seems likely that Plato's account of knowledge—even when limited to the account he implicates in the Argument—transcends the distinctions most relevant to contemporary theories of knowledge. Just as '*epi*' expresses both the formal relation and the intentional relation, so '*epistêmê*' (and '*gnôsis*') conflate concepts that we would distinguish.

Consider, for example, the way in which the following passage from the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites implicates a number of distinct features of knowledge:

> "The lovers of sounds and the lovers of sights welcome beautiful sounds, colors, and shapes, and all that's produced by such things, but their thought is unable to see the nature of the beautiful itself and welcome it."
>
> "That's just the way it is," he said.
>
> "And in fact wouldn't those able to approach and see it by itself be rare?"
>
> "Quite right."
>
> "Then does the man who is accustomed to beautiful things but is not accustomed to beauty itself—nor is able to follow if someone leads him to knowledge of it—seem to you to live in a dream or is he awake? Consider it. Is this not what it is to dream: whether asleep or awake, to regard what is a likeness as not a likeness but to be the thing itself to which it is like?"
>
> "I would say," he said, "that this is just the sort of thing dreaming is."
>
> "What about the opposite of this—the one who regards both some beautiful itself and is able to see both it and its participants and regards neither the participants as the thing itself nor the thing itself as the participants—does this one seem to you to be living as awake or dreaming?"
>
> "He's wide awake," he said.

23. Cf. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 192.

> "Therefore we're correct to say that the thought of this man is knowledge because he knows but the thought of the other one is belief because he believes." (476b–d)

In the first place, we find the usual Platonic parallel between sight and knowledge expressed by the claim that whereas the lovers of sights and sounds cannot *see* the form of beauty, the philosophers can. The seeing-knowing parallel tends to put knowledge in terms of acquaintance. Just as one is put in contact with the objects of sight through seeing, so one is put in contact with the objects of knowledge through knowing. Less directly, but still plausibly, the seeing-knowing parallel tends to emphasize knowledge-what as opposed to knowledge-that. The main reason for this is that (i) the objects of Platonic knowledge are those things that answer the Socratic "What is . . . ?" question, but (ii) knowledge-that is not limited to statements concerning the essence of something. It makes *prima facie* sense to say, for example, that one *knows that* Socrates is standing next to Crito or that one *knows that* this is the right road to Larissa. On the other hand, limiting the objects of knowledge to forms—which are at least essences, even if they are more than that—suggests that Plato's account of knowledge is more knowledge-what than knowledge-that.

But the passage also states that the person with knowledge "regards [*hêgoumenos*] both some beautiful itself and is able to see both it and its participants and regards neither the participants as the thing itself nor the thing itself as the participants." The language of *hêgeomai* suggests knowledge-that inasmuch as *what* one regards is not so much a form or essence as it is a more complex state of affairs.[24] It is natural to paraphrase the passage in this way: The philosophers' knowledge is characterized by their thinking that the form of beauty is distinct from the many beautiful things. There is a lack of confusion on the part of the philosophers about

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24. Cf. Plato's use of *hêgeomai* in his description of the just person: "In all these actions he [the just person] regards as [*hêgoumenon*] and names a just and fine action one that preserves and helps to produce this condition, and wisdom the knowledge that supervises this action; but [he regards as and names] an unjust action one that undoes this condition, and lack of learning, in its turn, the belief [*doxan*] that supervises this action" (443d–444a).

the difference between the forms and sense-perceptible objects. For example, the philosophers *know that* the *Mona Lisa* is not the form of beauty, but neither the formal nor the intentional object(s) of this knowledge are obviously limited to the forms.

Lastly, in its use of '*dynamai*' and cognates, the passage (476b–d) implicates a kind of ability or know-how. Unlike the philosopher, the lover of sights and sounds is unable ('*adynatos*,' 476b) to see the form of beauty. Plato's use of '*dynamis*,' '*dynatos*,' and so forth in speaking of those who are able to know suggests that knowledge involves some kind of skill in accomplishing something.

To summarize so far: the concept of knowledge implicated by Plato's statements in the Argument and its context cannot be adequately distinguished by the current usual distinctions concerning knowledge. Of course, Plato could be under no obligation to observe our distinctions about knowledge, but we should not overlook the fact that interpreters have perhaps almost been forced to appeal to the above distinctions because Plato does not make clear in the Argument what he thinks knowledge is.[25]

It is possible to think that Plato's failure to clearly articulate what knowledge is—both in the Argument and in the *Republic* as a whole—is a failure of writing or thinking on his part,[26] but the fact that Plato is a careful writer and thinker suggests that the explanation of the missing articulation of knowledge lies elsewhere. It is true that Plato is attempting to keep his exposition of metaphysical and epistemological issues to a minimum in order to not stray too far from the topic of justice, but there is another reason why he does not give a more complete account of knowledge in the Argument. In the context of the Argument Plato does not articulate what knowledge is because such articulation—a statement of the necessary and sufficient conditions

25. Cf., e.g., Stokes's attempt to distinguish distinction between '*epistêmê*' and '*gnôsis*.'
26. See, e.g., Gulley, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, 65–6.

of knowledge, for instance—would conflict with the goal of the Argument, which is to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds to stop thinking of sense-perceptible objects as the objects of knowledge.

The source of the potential conflict is the close connection—perhaps identification—one assumes the lovers of sights and sounds hold between knowledge and sense perception. As noted in the previous chapter (section IV.A), Plato's description of the lovers of sights and sounds as people who "run around" to various festivals but avoid discussions (*logoi*, 475d5) suggests that first-hand, direct perceptual experience is important to them and that without it they would not have knowledge of the things that interest them.[27] The statement that the lovers of sights and sounds avoid discussions might seem trivial, but as we shall see it has significant implications.

Now, one thing that sense perception cannot do, which Plato thinks knowledge can do, is *enable one to explain what one knows*. As the strategy of the Argument would suggest, this point is not made prior to book 5 nor in the Argument but is emphasized after the Argument, in particular at 532a–b and 534b–c.[28] Knowledge of the forms enables one to explain what one knows—that is, the distinct nature of the object of one's knowledge—whereas perception of

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27. Annas claims that "'the sight-lovers' as first characterized seemed to be experts of some kind rather than people who just observe instances, and it seems ludicrous if their claim that there are many beautifuls, not one, merely comes down to the claim that beauty has many instances" (*An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 204). (Gosling makes a similar claim in "*Republic* 5: *Ta Polla Kala*," 120.) However, a careful reading of the description of the lovers of sights and sounds does not characterize them as experts but as a strange group of people whom Glaucon mistakenly thinks love learning about everything. Stokes makes a similar point ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 290n10).

28. Even in these passages, however, it is not clear that Plato is stating what we would recognize as necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge. One reason to suspect that he is not is that when he sets about doing so in the *Theaet*., he shows himself capable of carefully treating the necessary and sufficient conditions. For this reason I will speak of the *accounts* or *characterizations* of knowledge, which can be good without stating necessary and sufficient conditions, that Plato gives in the *Rep*. Contrary to this, Fine assumes that Plato is giving necessary and sufficient conditions and that when Plato says that the dialectical man is capable of giving an account of *X* that this is a necessary condition of knowledge of *X* ("Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 112). But the passage is just as easily read as saying that giving an account of *X* is something one can do in virtue of possessing knowledge, that is to say, the ability to give an account is subsequent to whatever the necessary and sufficient conditions are.

sense-perceptible objects does not similarly enable one to explain what one perceives.[29] The reason for this is that explanation is a matter of articulating the *logos* of a thing, and the causal relation of perception does not provide sufficient information about the nature of what one perceives.

Here again the passage discussed in the previous section concerning those things that "summon the intellect" (523b) is helpful in explaining Plato's position because it points out his commitment to the idea that perception is insufficient for saying what the nature of something is. Initially, one might think that in this passage Plato says that sight is sufficient to convey what the nature of a finger is.[30] But Plato does not say this and even hedges against such a position.

The focus of the passage is on cases in which what is reported is both *F* and not-*F*. These are said to be "strange interpretations received by the soul and require further consideration" (524b1–2), which means that some kind of thought is required to determine what the thing reported is—at the least, calculation is required to determine whether the thing is one thing or more than one. But even in cases where what is reported is not both *F* and not-*F*, what perception "reports to the soul" is insufficient for knowing what something is. Note that Plato does not say that perception can by itself provide knowledge of what, for example, a finger is. The only claim affirmed about sensory reports of fingers is that such reports do not "compel" (523d, 524c; cf. 526b) a soul to think at all about what is seen (523d). Moreover, Plato is careful to say that "the soul *of the many* [*tôn pollôn*] is not compelled to ask the intellect what a finger is" (523d3–4),

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29. As part of his defense of the veridical reading of the Argument, Gosling mistakenly assumes that the lovers of sights and sounds are concerned with giving accounts or explanations of the things they experience ("*Republic*: Book 5: *ta polla kala* etc.," 122–5; the words "account" and "explanation" appear numerous times in these pages). (Annas (*An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 224–5) makes a similar claim.) Gosling's assumption depends on his view that the *dynamis* of belief is not *epi* objects but propositions, but his view has been adequately refuted by, *inter alia*, F. C. White, "J. Gosling on *ta polla kala*." One key point in the refutation is that the text never indicates that the lovers of sights and sounds are interested in giving explanations.

30. This appears to be the view of Annas: "[concepts] like 'finger' . . . can be ascribed adequately on the basis of experience" (*An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 220). See above note 14.

but this does not mean that "the many" can explain what a finger is. The context of this passage is, after all, about the kinds of studies that are "apt to draw men toward being [*ousia*]" (523a2–3), not about the difference between the natures of fingers and bigness. The *explanation* of what it is to be a finger does not differ in principle from the explanation of what bigness is, even if some sensory perceptions cause a person to think more about bigness than about fingerhood.

All this is to reinforce the point that knowledge is unlike sense perception because knowledge enables one to explain what one knows whereas sense perception does not.[31] But the difference between Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds concerning what knowledge is explains why Plato does not state what he thinks knowledge is in the Argument. If he were to state what he thinks knowledge is, he would lose the agreement of the lovers of sights and sounds—or at least raise their suspicions unnecessarily—and defeat one of his broader purposes. Moreover, if he were to state merely that knowledge is not dependent on or identical to sense perception, he would lose the agreement. So, following the procedure explained in chapter 1, Plato uses '*epistêmê*' and '*gnôsis*' and lets the lovers of sights and sounds assume they know what those words mean, knowing that the difference between them concerning knowledge will be irrelevant when the lovers of sights and sounds discover their mistake about 'what is' and so forth in Part 2.

Having explained why Plato does not give an account of knowledge in the Argument, let us explain as much as possible now the account of knowledge he seems to presuppose, which is expressed most clearly in the account of dialectic.[32]

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31. As noted above (note 28), whether knowledge should be *identified* with the ability to explain what one knows—and defend one's claims against criticisms from all corners (534b–c)—is a further question, the answer to which is underdetermined by the text of the *Rep*.

32. To restate the second point made in the introduction above, there are other points in the *Rep*. where Plato discusses knowledge, but I take it that there is an overall consistency about what Plato says about knowledge in the dialogue.

> We said that sight at last tries to look at the animals themselves and at stars themselves and then finally at the sun itself. So, also, when a man tries by discussion, without any of the senses, [and] by means of the argument to set out towards [*ep' . . . horman*] each thing itself, that which it is, and does not stop before he grasps by thought [*noêsis*] itself that which is good itself, he comes to the very end of the intelligible realm just as that other man was then at the end of the visible. (532a2–b2)
>
> [A dialectical] man is able to separate out the form [*idea*] of the good and distinguish it in the argument [*tô(i) logô(i)*], and, going through every test [*elenchôn*], as it were in battle—eager to meet the test [*elenchein*] of being [*ousian*] rather than that of opinion [*doxan*]—he comes through all this with the argument [*tô(i) logô(i)*] still on its feet. (534b8–c3)[33]

It is clear both from these passages and from the analogy of the sun in book 6 that Plato thinks knowledge is similar to sense perception in important ways. But because (i) Plato's description of dialectic includes the claim that knowledge enables one to give an explanation of what one knows and (ii) sense perception does not enable one in the same way, we need to explain how that claim is compatible with the analogy between seeing and knowing, or, in other words, what the true basis of the analogy is.

In the first place, Plato states that the one who knows has "an account [*logos*]" (534b) to give both to himself and to another person.[34] '*Logos*' is a notoriously difficult term to pin down in Plato, but what he means by it here (534b4) is explained in part by what he says just below (534b–c). One aspect of giving a *logos* of something is distinguishing the form—in this case, the form (*idea*, 534c1) of the good—from everything else (*tôn allôn pantôn*, 534b). This language is similar to what Plato says in the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites about the person who is "awake": "the one who regards both some beautiful itself and is able to see both it and its participants and regards neither the participants as the thing itself nor the thing itself as the

33. Note that the "is able to" (534b8) is not expressed by a '*dynamai*' construction but by '*echê(i)*' with the infinitive '*diorisasthai*.' This differs from the proliferation of '*dynamai*' constructions in the Argument.
34. On the requirement to give an account both to oneself and to another, cf. *Soph*. 264e–265a.

participants" (476c7–d1).[35] In the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites, Plato emphasizes the distinction between the form and the participants in the form or, in language he uses elsewhere, between the true things and the shadows of those things.[36] In 534b–c, the distinction is broader than this. It is between the form of the good and *everything* else, which includes not just participants in the form of the good but even other forms.[37] So one aspect of a Platonic explanation is distinguishing one thing from all others, which involves knowing what *X* is and how *X* differs from all non-*X*.[38]

A second aspect of knowledge is that its possessor can withstand scrutiny from others. The use of '*elenchos*' (534c1, 3) suggests that Plato has in mind the Socratic method of refutation or something close to it.[39] Since, to oversimplify, one is refuted by Socrates by admitting that one holds beliefs that are incompatible with each other, the second aspect of

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35. Note that Plato also repeats the language about dreaming and waking (534c6–d1). These two points provide evidence that Plato considers the description in the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites of what knowledge is to be equivalent to the description of dialectic in book 7.
36. E.g., *Rep*. 601b9–c2.
37. Strictly speaking, however, this point depends on what the relation between the form of the good and the other forms is, a debate into which we cannot enter now.
38. This differs somewhat from what seems to be Plato's own (unstated) account of '*logos*' in the *Theaet*. According to Chappell, Plato's view in that dialogue is that a *logos* is an account of why a true belief is true (*Reading Plato's* Theaetetus, 201). However, there is nothing about Chappell's interpretation that is necessarily at odds with the one given in the *Rep*. It is true that in the *Theaet*. Plato criticizes the view that a *logos* is merely a matter of knowing the difference between the object of one's true belief and everything else (208d: "some people believe that if you get hold of the difference of anything, meaning the respect in which it differs from everything else, then you will also get hold of the *logos* of that thing. So long as you cling on to anything it has in common with other things, your account will not be about *it*. It will be about everything that shares that common feature.") The criticism of this view in the *Theaet*. is that it amounts to saying that "knowledge is correct belief plus knowledge of the difference" (210a), which is circular. However, we should note two differences between the *Theaet*. and the *Rep*. In the *Rep*., there is no attempt to offer a statement of the necessary and sufficient conditions of dialectic as the definition of knowledge. There is, to be sure, an attempt to state some of the characteristics of dialectic (knowledge), but these fall short of and are not intended to be a definition of knowledge. Secondly, Plato's expression of the concept of *logos* in the *Rep*. can be read as (and *is*, in this paper, read as) having knowledge of what *X* is in a positive sense *as well as* knowledge of the differences between *X* and everything else. This is expressed, or so I claim, in the statement that the dialectical person must be "able to separate out [*diorisasthai*] the *idea* of the good from all other things" (534b8–c1), and this is different from the account of *logos* criticized in the *Theaet*. Of course, it is also possible to read the statement about "separating out" as noncommittal on this point. Perhaps in the *Rep*. Plato does not distinguish between stating what *X* is and stating all the differences between *X* and non-*X*, but no present concerns are affected by failing to make that distinction.
39. See also Plato's comment that the rulers will "pay special attention to the education on the basis of which they will be able to question and answer most knowledgeably" (534d8–10). Reeve ("Blindness and Reorientation," 219) says that dialectic is "an obvious descendent of Socratic examination."

Platonic knowledge is that, at the least, one has given an account of something that is not defeated by a contradiction.[40] Note that Plato does not say that one merely *can* do this but that the person with knowledge must have in fact done this—"he comes through all this with the argument still on its feet."

Although '*elenchos*' recalls the Socratic method, Plato's comment that the dialectical person is "eager to meet the test of *ousian* rather than *doxan*" suggests that the criterion of success is not simply being able to withstand cross-examination from another person but that one's explanation is also congruent with reality.[41] It is too much to say that Plato has a correspondence *theory* of truth in mind here, but the basic idea behind "the test of being" seems to be that one's explanation matches or fits reality.

Knowledge of the highest sort, then, enables its possessor to give an explanation of *X* that both states what *X* is and how it differs from all that is non-*X* and neither contradicts the other things one knows nor fails to match up with reality. This implies that knowledge essentially involves an ability to trace the relations—Plato is not clear about just what kind of relations need to be traced out: Logical? Mathematical? Others?—between the specific object of one's knowledge and everything else. As some have noted, this requirement seems to entail the claim that in order to know *X* one must be omniscient,[42] but whether or not Plato thinks that, it is clear that knowledge is not simply a matter of making a simple (correct and justified) judgment about

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40. This is true even if Rowe is correct that "Plato's Socrates always has a positive, and substantive, agenda" (*Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing*, 21). On the Socratic elenchus, see, e.g., Vlastos, "The Socratic Elenchus"; and Davidson, "The Socratic Conception of Truth," 241–4. See also the criticisms of Vlastos in *Does Socrates Have a Method?*

41. This is a theme elsewhere, too. In the *Symp*. Socrates remarks to Agathon that the latter's difficulty is not being unable to contradict Socrates but to contradict the truth (*Symp*. 201c).

42. See Rowe, "Plato on Knowing and Merely Believing," for a plausible attempt to sort out why Plato sometimes seems to represent knowledge as something requiring omniscience. See also *Rep*. 517b6–7: "A god doubtless knows if it [what is conveyed in the image of the cave] happens to be true."

X. All, or a good amount of, one's background knowledge is always implicated in one's knowledge of some one thing.

As noted above, the account of knowledge also includes the notions of truth and defeaters. First, knowledge involves truth because one's account of *X* (and its relations to all non-*X*) needs to be consistent with the way things actually are. However, on Plato's view, the truth of one's statements is best, and perhaps only, tested through discussion with others. This may seem an inadequate procedure for verifying the truth of what one thinks, but Plato obviously puts much stock in it. Secondly, Plato thinks that one lacks knowledge of *X* until one is able to respond to any proposed defeaters of one's account of what *X* is and how it is distinct from all non-*X*. There is no knowledge without passing through the rigors of scrutiny by interlocutors.

Each of these points, and the language with which Plato presents this account of knowledge, point to the centrality of what we might call the "noetic unity" of Platonic knowledge, or the way in which *epistêmê* is actually or dispositionally formed out of many aspects into a single, unified state in and of the *psychê*.[43] Knowledge is *actually* formed when a person possesses it; it is *dispositionally* formed when a person merely has the ready ability to form it. The philosopher actually possesses knowledge when he sees the good (519c–d), but only dispositionally possesses it immediately after descending into the cave.

One piece of evidence for the claim that noetic unity is central to the Platonic conception of knowledge is the emphasis on the characterological prerequisites for philosophical study in the *Republic*. At the beginning of book 6, after completing the Argument, Plato states that good rulers must "possess" (*echô*, 485a2, 485a6) the "quality" (*tropon*, 485a1) of knowing what each

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43. This is consistent with Plato's view of reason (the rational part of the soul) as a unified, single, eternal, psychic element. This characterization of reason is held consistently throughout the *Rep*.; see, e.g., 428c–429a, 439d, 442c, 611b1–612a6.

thing is (484d4–5), and implies that the way to explain how the rulers are able to possess this quality is to list the qualities of their "philosophic natures" (*tôn philosophôn phuseôn*, 485a10). Among these qualities are (1) a love of knowledge of *everything* that is not subject to coming-in-to-being and passing-away,[44] (2) a *love* of truth and *hatred* of falsehood,[45] (3) a concern for the pleasures of the soul rather than the pleasures of the body, (4) not being a lover of money, (5) not given to "petty speech" (*smikrologia*, 486a5) or boasting, (6) courage, manifested especially by a disregard for death, (7) being "just and gentle" rather than "difficult to partner with and savage" (486b11–12), (8) learning easily, (9) a good memory, which is especially emphasized, (10) musicality and gracefulness, and (11) moderation and charm (485a–486b).[46] At the end of this list Socrates asks, "Have we . . . gone through particular qualities that are in any way unnecessary and inconsequent to one another in a soul that is going to partake adequately and perfectly in 'that which is'?" (486e1–3). Glaucon replies emphatically: "*Anagkaiotata men oun*"—"[They are] certainly most necessary" (487a1). Plato is keen to emphasize that each of these qualities is *essential* for one to have knowledge of the forms. They are not merely accidental qualities that are useful for acquiring knowledge or that *happen* to lead to knowledge.[47]

The necessity of these requirements and the requirement that one's explanation survive every *elenchos* point toward an account of knowledge that is broadly psychological, that is, (i)

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44. See also 490a9–b4: ". . . the nature of the real lover of learning [is] to strive for 'that which is' [*to on*]; and he does not tarry by each of the many things [*pollois hekastois*] believed to be but goes forward and does not lose the keenness of his love [*tou erôtos*] nor cease from it before he grasps the nature itself of each thing which is [*ho estin hekastou*] with the part of the soul fit to grasp a thing of that sort." Vlastos ("A Metaphysical Paradox," 12–13) emphasizes the crucial point that the philosopher is not just a "Formknower" but a "Formlover." Vlastos states that the reason for this is ultimately that in the experience of the forms "Plato finds happiness, beauty, knowledge, moral sustenance and regeneration, and a mystical sense of kinship with eternal perfection" (ibid., 15).
45. See also 490b9–10: "'What then? Will this man [the lover of learning] have any part in caring for falsehood, or, all to the contrary, will he hate it?' '"He'll hate it," he said.'"
46. For a similar list, see 535a–536a.
47. This is stated elsewhere, too, e.g., 539d4–5, "those with whom one shares arguments are to have orderly and stable natures."

concerned with the thoughts and arguments a person actually has or is able to produce and defend and (ii) dependent on a person's having the right kind of psychological makeup and abilities. All these things point away from a view of knowledge either as merely a matter of true propositions (sentences, statements, or whatever) that can be related in an appropriate way to other propositions or as merely a matter of viewing the right kind of objects.[48] What Plato's view requires is, among other things, that in order to have knowledge of *X* the *knower* must have an accurate explanation of *X* that represents *X* as it is on the basis of the knower's own character, thought, and experience. In the course of such explanatory representation the knower will need to correctly express the interrelations that are present among the objects of his knowledge in a way that simultaneously requires and exhibits the interrelations of the objects of knowledge mirrored in his noetic structure.[49] The necessary noetic unity distinguishes Plato's account because it involves all the different faculties, cognitive states, acts of thought, memories, arguments, and engagement in Socratic cross-examination—quite a large, interrelated, and complicated lot of

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48. Cf., e.g., what Kornblith has called the "arguments-on-paper thesis" about justification, which holds that a person is justified—we can apply the point to knowledge, too—in believing "a particular proposition is true just in case that proposition appears on the list of propositions that person believes, and either it requires no argument, or a good argument can be given for it which takes as premises certain other propositions on the list" (Kornblith, "Beyond Foundationalism and the Coherence Theory," 599). Kornblith's critique of the arguments-on-paper thesis is that it cannot account for the *dependency* of one belief on another, but the way in which one's "beliefs"—or whatever Plato thinks is the relevant kind of cognitive state—depend on each other will be brought to light through Socratic cross-examination. If the dependency relations are inadequate, then the "beliefs" will be revised. Of course, Plato's insistence on the objectivity of the forms as *the* objects of knowledge will run contrary to Kornblith's proposal to naturalize epistemology and focus on "questions about the sorts of processes responsible for the presence of [justified] beliefs" (ibid., 602) because Plato will also want to focus on the nature of the proper objects of the faculties of knowledge and belief. I owe the connection between these ideas and Kornblith's article to Willard, "Knowledge and Naturalism."

49. This is my way of paraphrasing Plato's claims that "the various studies acquired without any particular order by the children in their education must be integrated [*synakteon*] into an overview [*synopsin*] which reveals the kinship of these studies with one another and with the nature of 'that which is'" (537b8–c3) and "the man who is capable of an overview [*synoptikos*] is dialectical while the one who isn't, is not" (537c6–7). This is consistent with what Plato says in places in passing (e.g., 491c7–9: "grasp it correctly as a whole, and it will look perfectly plain to you, and what was said about them before won't seem strange") and with his position in book 10 that the proper production of something must be based on the knowledge of the person who is able to use it correctly (601b–602c).

things!—that contribute to and constitute in one way or another anyone's possession of knowledge.

This account of knowledge allows us to get clearer about the way in which sight and knowledge are similar. On the one hand, this account does not allow that insight—or intuition or direct mental perception[50]—constitutes knowledge. Contrary to popular belief—see, for example, Shorey's accusation that Plato is "mystical"[51]—Plato does not really address whether such intuition is real or valuable, but in any case it cannot by itself amount to knowledge because it does not enable a person to withstand refutation. To be more precise, by itself insight into the nature of *X* neither enables one to distinguish it from everything non-*X* nor enables one to withstand Socratic cross-examination.

The real similarity between sense perception and knowledge does not lie in being a kind of perception. The similarity lies instead in their "dynamic" nature—they are both *dynameis*—that grasps the best object that is *epi* each *dynamis*: the sun and the form of the good. This is illustrated well when Plato gives his first description of dialectic, he states, "a [dialectical] man tries by discussion [*tô(i) dialegesthai*], without any of the senses, [and] through argument [*dia tou logou*] to set out towards each thing itself . . ." (532a5–7).[52]

First, dialectic is not accomplished through a mental "gaze" but through discussion and argument.[53] The similarity between sight and knowledge is based on the fact that they both have a distinct kind of object that they try to "grasp" (*lambanô*, 532b1). The uses of '*epicheireô*'

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50. This position is held by Fine ("Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 112) and opposed by Cornford, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*. See also the discussion of what Robinson calls the "intuition-theory" in *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, 172–7.
51. Shorey, introduction to *Republic*, ix–xi; cf. Russell's comment (*The Problems of Philosophy*, 62) that Plato's distinction between the ideal world and the sensible world "makes it easy to pass on into a mysticism."
52. Cf. 511b–c. This is consistent with Chappell's interpretation of knowledge in the *Theaet*. (*Reading Plato's* Theaetetus, 207) as being both propositional and objectual inasmuch as Plato treats facts as kinds of (complex, abstract) objects.
53. Cf. N. P. White, *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, 101, 113n54.

(532a4, 6[54]) and '*mê apostê(i)*' (532a7) suggest that Plato is using the infinitives '*apoblepein*' (532a4) and '*horman*' (532a7) as success verbs to point out that what sight and dialectic share is the *accomplishment of something*.[55]

Secondly, here we see the distinction, suppressed in the Argument, between the philosophers and the lovers of sights and sounds finally spelled out in two ways. The first is that dialectic is accomplished through discussion, which the lovers of sights and sounds deliberately avoid (475d4–6). The second is that dialectic is accomplished without the senses, which the lovers of sights and sounds employ wholeheartedly.

(4) From 'that which is' to 'that which completely is'

Unlike the topics of the previous two sections, the issue covered in this one has been helpfully and carefully delineated in the secondary literature, and it makes sense to follow the main contours of that discussion.

Whether the inference from {6} to {7} is valid depends on the relation between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is'. Interpreters are divided about whether there is any difference between the two. Wrenn, for example, assumes that there is a clear difference between the two.[56] One reason for doing so is to make a distinction between, in Wrenn's words, "what is so independently of how things seem," which is expressed by 'that which completely is', and "what is so at least partly in virtue of how things seem," which is expressed by 'that which is'.[57]

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54. Slings notes that the second instance is textually problematic.
55. This notion of accomplishment of an object is explicitly reflected in Plato's description of *dynameis* as those which "accomplish" (*apergazomai*, 477d) something, though at 477d what is accomplished is a cognitive state whereas at 532a–b what is accomplished is the object, which in turn is a necessary part of the production of a cognitive state. See also 518d5–7: "Rather, this art [the art of 'turning around'] takes as a given that sight is there, but not rightly turned nor looking at what it ought to look at, and accomplishes this object [*touto diamêchanêsasthai*]."
56. Wrenn, "Being and Knowledge," 100.
57. Ibid.

And the reason for wanting to make this distinction is to avoid an account of truth that requires degrees of truth.

Stokes has argued against this position on the grounds that "the sightlovers are in a weak position on the whole to distinguish between appearance and being; knowledge . . . comes for them through the senses. . . . [I]n practice the sightlovers must accept the general equivalence of appearing and being."[58] On Stokes's view, Wrenn's distinction between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is' depends on the assumption that the lovers of sights and sounds accept a distinction between appearance and reality.[59] But unlike Plato, who insists that one investigates through reason the deliverances of the senses (532a–b), the lovers of sights and sounds really do deny that there is a standard of reality independent of appearances.

However, the nature of the distinction held by the lovers of sights and sounds need not be as robust as Stokes requires. In particular, even if the lovers of sights and sounds reject an appearance–reality distinction, they do not have to think that all appearances are on equal footing. In order to distinguish between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is', the lovers of sights and sounds need only distinguish between appearances that are more or less complete. On a basic level, if a lover of sights and sounds were presented with one of those pesky and ubiquitous shadow paintings (365c4, 523b6, 583b5, 586b8, 602d3), he would, like Glaucon and Adeimantus, be able to note its deceptive character.[60] Such recognition on his part would suffice to distinguish between an incomplete and a complete appearance. Moreover, since the lovers of sights and sounds claim to be a kind of connoisseur of sights and sounds, they could agree with a distinction between 'that which is', which they define as "what other people think of sights and

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58. Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 287.
59. Wrenn states without argument that the lovers of sights and sounds "have no reason to disagree with such a distinction between reality and appearances" ("Being and Knowledge," 101).
60. On *skiagraphia*, see Patterson, *Image and Reality in Plato's Metaphysics*, 32–3, 199n12; cf. *Parm*. 165b–d.

sounds," and 'that which completely is', which they define as "what we think of sights and sounds."

Although Wrenn's view escapes the philosophical challenge posed by Stokes, it should nonetheless be rejected because it does not fit the text. As Nehamas notes, Plato's usage in the Argument indicates that there is no difference between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is'. He says:

> Plato introduces the two extremes by means of the expressions "pure being" and "total not-being" at 477a and argues that the former is coordinate with knowledge (*epistêmê*) while the latter is coordinate with ignorance (*agnoia*). He then distinguishes knowledge from belief (*doxa*) at 477a–478a and goes on to claim, dropping the qualification without any sign of discomfort and without any apology, that knowledge is, to be sure (*ge pou*), coordinate with being. He makes the same point at 478b3–4 when he argues that since knowledge is of what is (*to on*), the object of belief must be other than what is, again, without qualification. He then proceeds to argue (478b6ff.) that the object of belief cannot be what is not (*to mê on*), once again without qualification. Thus, as he concludes, belief is neither of what is nor of what is not (478c6); what remains, distinct not only from pure being and not-being but from being and not-being as well, is the sensible world, consisting of the Forms' participants. Plato, therefore, does not distinguish between what purely is and what is—insofar as participants are not pure beings, they also are not beings.[61]

The lack of distinction between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is' means that {6} and {7} are identical. The distinction also holds on the negative side: 'that which not is' is the same as 'that which in no way is'. Furthermore, since 'that which is' = 'that which completely is' the objects of belief do not have being at all because they are distinct from 'that which is'.

Malcolm criticizes this account on the grounds that it ignores the points at which the object of belief is said to be and not to be (477a, 478d, 478e).[62] According to Malcolm, Plato distinguishes between (i) the object of knowledge ('that which completely is'), (ii) the object of

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61. Nehamas, "Participation and Predication in Plato's Later Thought," 345–6. Nehamas's interpretation of '*ge pou*' is not necessarily the correct one. It could mean the weaker "I suppose," which is how it is translated in chapter 1, section II.B.4. But this point does not affect Nehamas's larger point that Plato thinks that 'that which is' and 'that which completely is' are not different.
62. Malcolm, *Plato on the Self-Predication of Forms*, 83.

ignorance ('that which in no way is'), and (iii) the object of belief, "which is and is not."[63] Malcolm agrees that (iii) is not a conjunction of (i) and (ii), but on his view this is not because the objects of belief lack being but because they lack *complete* being. That is to say, Malcolm's way of explaining why (iii) is not a combination of (i) and (ii) is to say that (iii) *is* a combination of being and not-being but *not* a combination of complete being and total not-being.

But 479c4–5 counts decisively against this interpretation because it says that "it is not at all possible to think of them [the objects of belief] fixedly as either 'to be' or 'not to be' or *both* or neither." This runs contrary to Malcolm's interpretation because 'to be' and 'not to be' are not qualified by "complete" and "total." The upshot is that there is no difference between 'that which is' and 'that which completely is'. Thus, since {6P} and {6LSS} are validly inferred, the same can be said for {7P} and {7LSS}.

B. {9}–{11}: Metaxu

{9} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then *X* lies between 'that which is' and 'that which not is'.
{10} If there is an *X* that lies between 'that which is' and 'that which not is', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.
So, {11} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge. [9, 10]

Call this fragment "{B}." The conclusion of {B} is {11}, which depends only on {9} and {10} and not on any part of {A}.

As in {A}, premises that include '*einai*' need to be disambiguated. From Plato's point of view, {B} runs as follows:

{9P} If there is an *X* that is a sense-perceptible object, then *X* lies between the forms and nothing.

63. The phrase "which is and is not" is Malcolm's.

{10P} If there is an *X* that lies between the forms and nothing, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.

{11P} If there is an *X* that is a sense-perceptible object, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.

From the point of view of the lover of sights and sounds, {B} is:

{9LSS} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then *X* lies between sense-perceptible objects and nothing.

{10LSS} If there is an *X* that lies between sense-perceptible objects and nothing, then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.

{11LSS} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then that which is over *X* lies between ignorance and knowledge.

Both versions are clearly valid.

The careful reader will note that {11LSS} is the same as {11}. The reason for this is that it is not clear what the lovers of sights and sounds mean by "an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be'." Stokes suggests that they have in mind the forms, but that can hardly be right. The lovers of sights and sounds are not said to accept in some way that there is such a thing as, say, the form of beauty; they are said to reject entirely the notion of Platonic forms.[64] Perhaps, given their empiricist tendencies, they think of a complex idea (in the Lockean sense) as "an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be'" because complex ideas have some basis in reality even though they are also in part produced by the activity of the mind.[65] Fortunately, the logic of the Argument does not require us to say with certainty what the lovers of sights and sounds mean by "an *X* that is

64. See Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 284; cf. *Rep*. 476b–c.
65. Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 2.12.1.

both ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’.” In fact, the conditional nature of premises {9LSS}–{11LSS} suggests that they do not have anything at all clearly in mind.

Plato uses {11} in {G} (see section G below). In particular, the conjunction of {11} with

{37} Belief lies between knowledge and ignorance

allows Plato to infer

{38} If there is an *X* that is both ‘to be’ and ‘not to be’, then belief is over it,

which is an important premise in Part Two. The difference between {11} and {38} is that {37} shows that *belief* is what is between ignorance and knowledge, assuming that the antecedent of {38} is true.

Thus, the pertinent question concerning the soundness of {B} is not whether belief is between knowledge and ignorance but whether the following schema is true:

(i) faculty_1 is over object_1,

(ii) faculty_2 is over object_2,

(iii) faculty_3 is between faculty_1 and faculty_2,

(iv) faculty_3 is over object_3,

(v) therefore, object_3 is between object_1 and object_2.

Although Plato *argues* later, from {35}–{37}, that the faculty of belief is between the faculties of knowledge and ignorance because belief is darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance, he never argues for the more formal (i)–(v). In fact, {10} simply *assumes* a one-to-one correspondence between at least the faculties of knowledge, ignorance, and (the as yet unnamed faculty of) belief and their formal objects. It would be easier to accept both this assumption and (i)–(v) if we had a better understanding Plato’s use of ‘*metaxu*,’ so let us try to explain what Plato has in mind.

To begin, there is no doubt that Plato thinks that the relation between objects and faculties admits of a relation expressed by '*metaxu*.' In the first place, he asserts that 'that which is' and 'that which not is' have something in between them.[66] On Plato's analysis of sense-perceptible objects, they are that which is in-between (*ta metaxu*, 478e5), which seems to mean that they participate in both being and nonbeing (478e1–2).

This, of course, raises the thorny issue of the sense in which Plato thinks sense-perceptible objects are both 'what is' and 'not what is'. In general, the predicative reading of '*einai*' in these contexts seems to be Plato's preference.[67] In the *Symposium*, for example, we read that the beautiful itself—in contrast to the many beautiful things, among which are beautiful sense-perceptible objects—is not

(1) beautiful in one respect, ugly in another; nor

(2) beautiful at one time, ugly at another; nor

(3) beautiful in relation to some things, ugly in relation to others; nor

(4) beautiful in one place, ugly someplace else; nor

(5) beautiful for some people, ugly for others (211a).

These criteria for being the beautiful itself suggest how something can participate in both being and nonbeing: a beautiful sense-perceptible object is beautiful in one respect, ugly in another, beautiful at one time, ugly at another, and so on. With one important exception, these criteria are applicable to the Argument. The exception is that in the Argument Plato says that sense-perceptible objects participate in both being and nonbeing *at the same time* (478d5).[68] So we

66. Cf. *Rep*. 478d3, d6, d11, e5; 479c7, d3, d7, d8.
67. This is not to say that the lovers of sights and sounds have to accept the predicative reading or anything implied by it.
68. Adam claims that '*hama*' should not be interpreted as "at the same time." He suggests that Plato simply means that "a particular *kalon* is *hama kalon kai aischron, ôs tisi men on kalon, tisi de aischron*" (= "is partly beautiful and

cannot say that in the Argument Plato holds that sense-perceptible objects participate in both being and nonbeing because they are *F* at one time and not-*F* at another because he says that sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F* at the same time.[69]

Just as the *Symposium* is helpful for understanding Plato's explanation of how the objects of belief can participate in both being and nonbeing, so it is helpful for understanding his explanation of how belief itself can be between knowledge and ignorance. Plato says, "holding a belief that is in fact correct, without being able to give a reason [*logos*] for it, is neither true knowledge—how can it be knowledge without a reason?—nor ignorance—for how can we call it ignorance when it happens to be true?" (202a). The distinction between true and false belief is not relevant here. What is relevant is that a belief can be true without one having an account of why it is true. On account of this lack, it is less than knowledge, but on account of its truth it is more than ignorance.[70]

Although the *Symposium* sheds light on how Plato thinks objects and epistemic states admit of an in-between condition, it does not explain why the lovers of sights and sounds should think that. On account of this we can say that, from Plato's point of view, {9P}–{11P} is sound but there is no account of why or how the one should think that {9LSS}–{11LSS} is sound.

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partly ugly" (Adam, *The* Republic *of Plato*, 1:342). But the "partly . . . partly . . ." interpretation usually requires a "*men* . . . *de* . . ." construction, which is absent from this passage.

69. Plato's insertion of '*hama*' in the Argument rules out Santas's way of accommodating the existential interpretation of '*einai*.' Santas takes the existential interpretation to entail that the objects of belief sometimes exist and sometimes do not exist (*Goodness and Justice*, 184; Gonzalez also overlooks '*hama*' ("Propositions or Objects?" 256n19)). This is something that Plato certainly holds of all sense-perceptible objects, as distinct from the forms which always exist. However, while this accommodation in terms of temporal continuity may work for other passages in Plato, it will not work for the Argument because the text clearly stipulates that an object of belief both 'is' and 'is not' at the same time.

70. Gonzalez says, "In assigning knowledge to forms and belief to sensibles, Socrates does not divorce them, but enables them to be related as their objects are related: just as sensibles imitate imperfectly what the forms themselves are perfectly, so does the belief assigned to sensibles intuit confusedly what the knowledge assigned to forms intuits clearly" ("Propositions or Objects?" 274). Inasmuch as "intuit confusedly" can be understood as "is true but lacking an account of why it is true," then Gonzalez is correct.

The difference between {9LSS}–{11LSS} and {9}–{11} brings this point out clearly. For while one might be tempted to agree too easily that {9}–{11} is sound because what both is 'to be' and 'not to be' sounds like something between 'that which is' and 'that which not is', the verbal ambiguity is removed in the LSS formulation. There one must hold that whatever is both 'to be' and 'not to be' is between sense-perceptible objects and nothing, but the truth of that claim seems to mean no more than that whatever is both 'to be' and 'not to be' is at least not nothing.[71] Why exactly this means that the faculty over what is both 'to be' and 'not to be' is between the faculties over sense-perceptible objects and nothing is uncertain.

Thus, although it is clear that Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds regard their respective versions of {B} as sound, only Plato has a clear conception of what '*metaxu*' means. In Part Two, the lovers of sights and sounds discover that their lack of a clear conception on this point is a major part of their undoing, though at present their interest in what '*metaxu*' means keeps them going in the Argument.[72]

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71. It is possible that both Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds simply assume a basic, intuited, inexplicable meaning of '*metaxu*' just as Euclid does in the *Elements*. Furthermore, if Pasch and Hilbert are correct about Euclid's use of '*metaxu*,' then it is possible that Plato likewise does not even recognize that he is using '*metaxu*' without admitting its axiomatic nature; see Hilbert, *The Foundations of Geometry*, §§3–4.
72. Cf. chapter 1, section V.B.1.

C. {12}–{18}: Dynameis

(1) The Argument of {C}

{12} If *X* is that by which we are able to do things, then *X* is a faculty.
{13} If *X* and *Y* are faculties, *X* and *Y* are different if and only if both (i) *X* and *Y* are over different things and (ii) *X* and *Y* accomplish different things.
{14} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* are over different things, then *X* and *Y* accomplish different things. [implicit]
{15} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* accomplish different things, then *X* and *Y* are over different things. [implicit]
{16} Belief is that by which we are able to believe.
So, {17} Belief is a faculty. [12, 16]
{18} Knowledge is a faculty.

Call this fragment "{C}." It contains the heart of Plato's famous argument about *dynameis*. Since there are no premises involving '*einai*,' there is no need to disambiguate {C} as we did with {A} and {B}.

If we ignore for the moment {14} and {15}, it is easy to see the traditional criticism leveled at {C}: {13} does not rule out the possibility that the two different *dynamis* might be over the same (kind of) object yet accomplish different things.[73] In fact, the mere assumption to the contrary would violate what a number of interpreters take to be the commonsense notion knowledge and belief can have the same objects.[74] The allegedly intractable nature of this

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73. The traditional objection is stated by many. For a representative statement (though not necessarily an endorsement), see N. P. White, *A Companion to Plato's* Republic, 158–9; and Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 202. For a stronger statement, see Crombie, *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines*, 2:57ff. Fine argues ("Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 90) that "husbandry and butchery, for instance, do different work . . . but . . . are both set over [*epi*] the same objects—domestic animals" and that this supports the traditional objection. But Fine's argument is mistaken. In the first place, the Argument is only concerned with faculties, not, as in Fine's suggestion, arts or skills. In book 1 (346a2–3), Plato says that "*hekastote tôn technôn heteran einai, tô(i) heteran tên dunamin echein*" and that each of the *technê* provides a particular (*idian*) kind of benefit, not a common (*koinên*) one (346a6–7). Although this statement is missing the explicit point that each *dynamis* is is set over a particular kind of thing, it might be equivalent to the description of *dynameis* in 477b–c. However, it seems unlikely that Plato thinks husbandry and butchery are examples of *dynameis* given his examples of them in the Argument: vision, hearing, knowledge, and belief. It is true that the arts of husbandry and butchery are kinds of knowledge, but this is tangential to the Argument because Plato does not have different kinds of knowledge in mind when he mentions knowledge. He is instead talking about the faculty of knowledge. Moreover, husbandry and butchery are, in fact, not set over the same objects. Husbandry is set over live animals; butchery is set over dead ones.
74. E.g., Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 200–1; Gosling, "*Doxa* and *Dynamis* in Plato's *Republic*," 126. Cf., e.g., Chisholm's statements such as "Smith believes what Jones knows" as statements that are obviously

commonsense notion has been put to two uses. First, it has been used to argue that Plato's view could not be so crazy as to violate it. Secondly, it has been used to argue that even if Plato's view were absurd enough to violate it, this view cannot be what is expressed in the Argument because it is doubtful that the lovers of sights and sounds would agree to it.[75]

We will respond to the first point in section 2 below, but regarding the second point, it must be admitted that the commonsense notion of the relation between knowledge and belief is beside the point. The lovers of sights and sounds have *agreed* that knowledge and belief are *epi* different objects. It is no criticism of the Argument to claim that their agreement would be contrary to common sense or that Plato's separation of the objects of belief and knowledge is not intuitively obvious.[76] In any case the present interpretation makes it *possible* for the lovers of sights and sounds to differ with Plato about the identity or nonidentity of the objects of knowledge and belief. It is only on a mistaken understanding of the dialectical requirement that Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds must agree about the meaning of each of the premises, in particular {14} and {15}. But we have seen that this is not the case. The Argument is designed to accommodate and exploit the assumptions made by the lovers of sights and sounds, especially when they differ from Plato's. It seems clear enough from the divided line (509d–511e) and the remarks about forms as paradigms (484c–d) that Plato thinks that knowledge and belief are *epi* different kinds of things, but his reasons for accepting that do not have to be acceptable to the lovers of sights and sounds. They could have entirely different reasons.

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possible and stand in need of explanation on any good theory of knowledge and belief (*Person and Object*, 115, 170–5).

75. Fine has made both arguments; see her "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 86–7.

76. Cf. N. P. White, *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, 106n9: "It having been agreed (on grounds given in 477e6–7—which are again non-question-begging) that *epistêmê* and *doxa* are different *dynameis*, and also (477c–d) that different *dynameis* have to do with different objects, Plato can conclude (given that Forms are *onta* and sensible objects are "between *to on* and *to mê on*," because of the difference in the way predicates apply to them) that it is reasonable to say that *doxa* has to do with sensible objects, whereas *epistêmê* has to do with Forms."

In fact, however, it seems that both Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds agree on a response to the traditional objection: the *dynameis* of knowledge and belief are faculties much like the faculties of sense-perception.[77] On the examples of *dynameis* given at 477c3–4, "sight and hearing are faculties, if you understand the form of which I want to speak." It is not difficult to accept that hearing and sight have different kinds of objects, that they, in less precise language, deal with different sorts of things.[78] The former deals with sounds and the latter with colors.[79] These examples provide some inductive support for the conclusion that the *dynameis* of knowledge and belief are distinct with respect to their objects. Furthermore, on the characterization of the lovers of sights and sounds as those who value the direct viewing and hearing of objects, it is reasonable to conclude that this is so.[80]

Hence, {14} and {15} express what is implied by the view that knowledge and belief are faculties. Just as the objects of sight are not heard, so the objects of hearing are not seen. And just as the sense-perceptions produced by sight are visual and not auditory, so the sense-perceptions produced by hearing are auditory and not visual.[81] This at least is reasonable based

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77. Cf. Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 278–9; Santas, "Hintikka on Knowledge and Its Objects in Plato," 42.

78. Reeve uses the phrase "deals with" in "Blindness and Reorientation," 210. This view of the faculties of sense perception (sight and sound in particular) is stated and accepted without dispute at *Rep*. 352e6–11 and *Theaet*. 184e8–185a3. The latter is as follows: "Socrates: 'Now, are you willing to agree that what you perceive by means of one perceptual capacity, you cannot perceive by means of another? So, for example, sounds cannot be seen, and sights cannot be heard.' Theaetetus: 'How could I refuse to agree to that?'" Chappell comments on this: "184e8–185a3 can be read as meaning simply: 'There is *some* good sense of "perception" in which what you perceive through one sense cannot be perceived through another'. *This* claim is . . . very plausible for all cases of perception" (*Reading Plato's* Theaetetus, 148).

79. In *Rep*. 507c, these are referred to—without hesitation on the part of Glaucon—as "the things seen" (*ta horômena*) and "the things heard" (*ta akouomena*).

80. This is especially the case given the inability of the veridical interpretation to provide a coherent interpretation of the Argument.

81. That there are two criteria for faculties and not just one, see N. P. White, *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, 106n9; and Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 290n14: "*ekeino monon* (that alone) at 477d1 contrasts with colour, shape, etc. in the previous sentence, and *hence* does not necessitate the identity of object and effect as a single thing (as Santas . . . saw in his reply [to Hintikka] but did make wholly explicit)."

on everyday experience, which ignores interesting cases of synesthesia, and, importantly, it is something with which the lovers of sights and sounds could readily agree.[82]

Another way of getting to this answer is by asking why the lovers of sights and sounds accept the notion of a *dynamis*.[83] After all, as Plato explicitly says (477c6–d1), a *dynamis* does not have color, shape, or other sensible qualities, yet those are the standards by which the lovers of sights and sounds judge what is real. On this basis, the *dynamis* of belief would seem to be just as objectionable as the beautiful itself. One response to this is that the lovers of sights and sounds accept the notion of *dynameis* in part because they are familiar with the faculties of sight and hearing; that is, the examples of sight and hearing are ones that they are going to accept.[84] They will also accept the *dynameis* of knowledge because they already admitted that they can know.

Now, one way in which the present reconstruction of {C} stands apart from others is that it takes {17} as the conclusion of an argument but {18} as a simple assertion. The reason for this is that Plato offers {16} but nothing similar for knowledge. That is to say, he does not explicitly state that knowledge is that by which we are able to know.

One could reasonably assume that such a premise is implicit, but such an assumption is not necessary because the lovers of sights and sounds already agree that knowledge is a faculty: they either identify or closely associate knowledge with sense perception. In Part One, the lovers of sights and sounds think that knowledge is over 'that which is' means that knowledge is over

82. For a discussion (with references) of the ancient interest in synesthesia, see Gage, *Colour and Culture*, 227–8.
83. Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 277.
84. This is also the view of Morgan, "Belief, Knowledge, and Learning in Plato's Middle Dialogues," 97.

sense-perceptible objects. Since they think they have knowledge of sense-perceptible objects, they do not need to be persuaded that knowledge is a faculty.[85]

But their intuitions about the faculty of belief are not as clear. Belief is mentioned in the Argument prior to this (at 477b4), but Plato cuts off that discussion of belief in order to introduce {12} and {13}.[86] At 477b4–7 Plato secures agreement with the claim that belief is a faculty, but {16} shows that he wants to make it as clear as possible to the lovers of sights and sounds (and to readers as well) that it is indeed a faculty.

Thus, Plato thinks that his opponents will agree without argument that {18} is true, but he wants to show his readers that the lovers of sights and sounds agree to {17} on the basis of an argument constructed of premises that the lovers of sights and sounds accept. In light of this they both agree that {C} is valid and sound.

(2) Belief

In our analysis of {A} in section II.A.3 we gave an account of the Platonic conception of knowledge, at least to the extent that Plato's concept of knowledge is evident in the *Republic*. Our present discussion of {C} provides the first good place in the Argument to provide a similar account of belief so that we can understand what the premises involving "belief" in the Platonic version of the Argument mean. Although there are fewer statements about belief in the *Republic* than there are about knowledge, there are enough to outline the main lines of Plato's concept of

85. For this reason Fine is mistaken in thinking that the premise "Knowledge is possible" must be implicit and that such an implicit premise might violate the dialectical requirement ("Knowledge and Belief in Republic 5–7," 93). There is no violation of the dialectical requirement because the lovers of sights and sounds think that knowledge is possible.

86. The reconstruction does not include the mention of belief prior to {C} because the same premises given at 477b4–10 are stated in {22} and{23}, but whereas the former premises are not supported by any other premises, {22} and {23} are supported by {13}, {15}, {17}, {18}, and {21}.

belief and to suggest tentatively what Plato's concept of the "justification" of belief might look like.

Concerning belief, Plato often uses '*doxa*' and its cognates in the *Republic* in ways that denote a commonsense notion of *opinion*.[87] This is clearly expressed in his comparison between true and false belief at 412e9–413a2: "It looks to me as though a belief [*doxa*] departs from our minds either willingly or unwillingly; the departure of the false belief [*hê speudês*] from the man who learns otherwise is willing, that of every true belief [*hê alêthês*] unwilling." What Plato says here clearly implies that a person's beliefs about, say, what is advantageous for the city can be either true or false.

In the analysis of knowledge, we claimed that Plato's concept of knowledge in the *Republic* is more or less consistent. The same is true for his concept of belief, though care needs to be taken in explicating one particular passage on *doxa*, 476c–d. This passage might be read in a way that suggests that a belief simply is a cognitive state produced by believing that a likeness is not a likeness but the thing itself to which it is like. The difference between this and the commonsense notion often expressed by '*doxa*' is evident in the fact that it makes sense to say that a belief (in the commonsense use of '*doxa*') is either true or false. But the sense of belief described in 476c–d would not, on this reading, admit of either or true or false because it is simply just what one normally means by "false opinion." If one's thought evinces confusion between *A* and *B*, then one is already mistaken about *A* and *B*. Thus, there would be no possibility of true belief in the second sense of belief.

If this were taken as a complete description of what it is to believe, then it would be impossible to reconcile it with the fact that elsewhere in the *Republic* Plato says that belief can

87. See, e.g., *Rep*. 367b, 377a, 377d, 382d, 560c, 574d.

be either true or false. So, instead of attributing contrary and intractable accounts of belief to Plato, we should claim instead that in saying that "we're correct to say that the thought of this man is knowledge because he knows but the thought of the other one is belief because he believes" (476d4–5) Plato only means to say that a sufficient but not necessary condition for belief is that one be confused.

Two things support this claim. First, if "belief" were always to be understood as "false belief," then Plato's claim that belief, in contrast with knowledge, makes mistakes would be too weak. What he should conclude is that belief always makes mistakes. But he does not. Secondly, there would be no reason why the part of the divided line containing sense-perceptible objects should be clearer than the part containing only images of those objects. If the cognitive states formed by the faculty of belief were always false, then it is not clear how they could be clearer than anything else. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that Plato's concept of belief expressed by '*doxa*' in the *Republic* is consistent throughout.

The chief characteristic of belief, according to Plato, is its instability. This is well captured in his statement that "when [the soul] fixes itself on that which is mixed with darkness, on coming into being and passing away, it believes and is dimmed, changing beliefs up and down, and seems at such times not to possess intelligence" (508d5–8). The contrast, discussed in section II.D below, between knowledge's inability to make mistakes and belief's proneness to them also depends on the unstable nature of belief.

However, along with this instability, Plato states the faculty of belief also naturally induces trust in its deliverances. According to the divided line, the product of belief in sense-perceptible objects is trust (*pistis*). This is clearly stated at 511d–e and 533e:

> . . . take these four affections arising in the soul in relation to the four segments: understanding in relation to the highest one, and thought in relation to the second; to the third assign trust, and to the last imagination. (511d–e)
>
> . . . call the first part 'knowledge,' the second 'thought,' the third 'trust,' and the fourth 'imagination.' And the latter two taken together 'opinion' . . . . (533e)

Let us set to one side the issue of imagination (*eikasia*) and focus on *pistis* because it is produced when the faculty of belief is over sense-perceptible objects, the kind of object most relevant to the Argument. How should one understand *pistis*? The straightforward explanation is that when one believes something, for example, *that this is a chair*, then one's belief is primarily characterized by the trust in or readiness to act on what one believes. If one believes that this is a chair, then one at least is ready to sit in the chair.

Irwin explains *pistis* as confidence, which is accurate as a translation, but then he explains that confidence is "recognition of the sensible things of which the [images of sensible things] are images."[88] *Pistis*, however, is not *recognition*. Recognition involves mental activity—awareness that this *X* is a *Y*—whereas *pistis* is simply confidence or trust, which requires no *mental* activity, only the action of trusting, which can be done without thinking about whether one has good reasons to trust. Of course, trust may be based on one's recognition or knowledge of something as trustworthy, but it need not be. Otherwise it would make no sense to say that a person's trust is misplaced.[89] Thus, in the *Republic*, the faculty of belief when set over sense-perceptible objects produces a cognitive state that is essentially characterized by trust.[90]

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88. Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*, 274.

89. Furthermore, in an interpretation of the cave analogy, if Irwin were correct we would need to attribute recognition to the prisoners, but this seems mistaken. Irwin says first that the cave illustrates the point that "we make progress from the first stage [*eikasia*] to the second stage [*pistis*] by undergoing Socratic elenchos (515d1–8)" (ibid., 276). He also says that we "are not to suppose that at [the level of *pistis*] elenctic inquiry has completely reached its goals, for since the released prisoner cannot see the real horses outside the cave, he cannot say correctly what the dummies are; still, he can see enough to recognize that what he had previously called horses are in fact distorted and imperfect likenesses of the originals he now sees" (ibid.). The basic problem with both statements is that according to Plato's text, the freed prisoner who is shown the dummies would "be at a loss [*aporein*] and believe that what was seen before [the shadows on the wall] is truer than what is now shown" (515d). That is, the freed prisoner *would not* recognize that the shadows of horses on the wall are imperfect likenesses of the dummy horses. He believes and

We can try to fill in some more details about belief by noting two things. First, in the case of knowledge, the development of the faculty of knowledge is difficult and requires lengthy education. Secondly, in the Argument, Plato refers only to belief, never to true belief. But since it is plausible that the faculty of belief can be developed through education just as the faculty of knowledge can, the best candidate for what a *developed* faculty of belief produces is not mere belief but correct or true belief.

Although there is no clear statement on this point in the *Republic*, in the *Timaeus* Plato bases an argument for the existence of the forms on the difference between knowledge (*nous*) and true belief (*doxa alêthês*) (51d–e).[91] The argument proceeds from the existence of two kinds of mental states to the existence of two kinds of things. The important point for our purposes is not whether the argument is successful. The important point is the selection of true belief as *the* contrast with knowledge and the fact that Plato uses this contrast as the *basis* of a very important argument—namely one that, if it is not intended to establish the existence of forms, at least provides a reasonable motivation to think they exist. So, just as knowledge is the best kind of mental state one can have with respect to the forms, true belief is the best kind of mental state one can have with respect to sense-perceptible objects. Thus, the claim that true belief is the proper contrast with knowledge is one that Plato himself also makes.

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would rather believe that the shadows are truer. Secondly, there is no indication that the prisoner progresses from *eikasia* to *pistis* via elenctic inquiry, which would involve some degree of thoughtfulness. The progression appears to be entirely compulsory. The freed prisoner is *forced* out of the cave.

90. On this account it is likely that Plato's discussion of *doxa* in the *Theaet*. revises or at least expands on this characterization of the cognitive state of belief.

91. Note that the evidence of the *Tim*. is viable regardless of when one supposes it was written. If one thinks it is part of the middle period, composed almost at the same time as the *Rep*., then there will clearly be some similarities in the thought and argument of each. Indeed, among those who give the *Tim*. an early date, one of the reasons for dating it early is that it seems to share a number of doctrinal positions with the *Rep*. But, on the other hand, those inclined toward a later date are usually committed to a unitarian view of Plato according to which he did not change his views much, even later in his later compositions. So they, too, would not be disinclined to think that the positions of the two are close.

This account of belief explains how Plato can at times closely associate true belief with knowledge and intellect. In the *Republic* Plato asks whether the class of "food, drink, seasoning, and nourishment in general" participates more in being than "true belief, knowledge, intelligence, and, in sum, of all virtue" (585b11–c2). Given the sharp distinction elsewhere between opinion and knowledge (in the Argument, for example, but also 533e–534a), classifying belief—even true belief—with knowledge, intelligence, and all virtue seems odd. That is, it seems odd unless one keeps in mind that the cognitive states of knowledge and *true* belief are products of faculties developed through education. Plato even says that "the simple and moderate desires, pleasures, and pains, those led by calculation accompanied by intelligence and right belief, you will come upon in few, and those the ones born with the best natures and *best educated*" (431c5–7). Thus, the person who possesses a developed faculty of belief has the ability to correctly trust in the objects of belief.

The correctness of a belief is measured primarily by its effects. At 443d–444a (see above note 24), Plato says that a right belief is one that contributes to the preservation of the good condition of a thing. A wrong belief is one that undoes the good condition.[92] This is consonant with the account of courage given in book 4. Political courage is the power to preserve the "right and lawful belief about what is terrible and what is not" (430b3–4). A right belief is one that maintains the condition of the city; a wrong belief undoes it.[93]

This standard of evaluation for belief is what one might expect if one thinks, as Plato does, that the very objects of belief are fundamentally unstable. Because the objects of belief are always both 'to be' and 'not to be', there is no way of saying whether one's cognitive states of

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92. See also *Rep*. 584d–585a
93. Cf. *Rep*. 431c, 602a. Note also Plato's use of the phrase "right trust" (601e8) in the context of practical knowledge. Cf. *Rep*. 505e3: "stable trust."

belief match up correctly with them, which is one important contrast between knowledge and belief. The definiteness of the objects of knowledge allows one's knowledge to match up. Hence, the correctness of belief must be measured in some other way, namely, in terms of its effects.

We are now in a position to offer some suggestions about how Plato might think about the "justification" of beliefs.[94] The nature of these comments is somewhat speculative, but has the virtues of aligning with the few things Plato does say on the topic in the *Republic* and providing a basis for responding to the objection that the objects of knowledge and belief cannot be completely disjoint.

According to Plato, "justified" true belief is brought about by a combination of the faculties of knowledge and belief. That is to say, a "justified" true belief is, of course, a *belief*, but it is one that is produced in concert with the faculty of knowledge. Thus, it is not through or by means of the faculty of belief *alone* that a "justified" true belief is produced.

In order to think this we need to assume that the natural state of the faculty of belief is to be ruled by the intellect. When the faculty of belief is ruled by the faculty of knowledge, which naturally rules, moderation and justice are present in the soul. Because being ruled by knowledge is *natural* to the faculty of belief, "justified" true belief is still the function of the developed faculty of *belief* even though "justified" true belief must be produced in conjunction with the faculty of knowledge.[95] On this account, nothing is added to true belief to "justify" it. "Justified"

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94. I will put "justification" and the like in quotation marks in order to keep clear about the fact that contemporary notions of justification are not in view.

95. The reader will have noted the (vague) references above to "alignment," "consent," and "ruled," all of which are reminiscent of Plato's discussion of how the parts of the soul ought to work together: The spirited and desirous parts of the soul need to align themselves with the rational part by consenting to be ruled by it. The point of adopting similar language in the discussion of faculties is to make the claim that just as the rational part of the soul rules the other parts, so the faculty of knowledge rules the faculty of belief, which needs to align itself with the faculty of knowledge by consenting to be ruled by it.

is simply a description that can be applied to a true belief when the relevant knowledge is also present.

If this analysis of "justified" true belief is correct, it is clear that if we take our point of departure from the question of what Plato thinks will turn true belief into knowledge, we will be misled. Such a question assumes that Plato's epistemological project is to explain what could be added to true belief to turn it into knowledge. According to Plato's account in the *Republic*, however, nothing can be "added" to true belief to turn it into knowledge. This fact indicates that one of Plato's important epistemological tasks in the *Republic* is not how to turn true belief into knowledge but how to turn mere belief into a "justified" true belief. That transformation, according to the interpretation being advanced here, takes place when knowledge rules and belief submits to the rule of the intellect.

This account of how mere belief is transformed into "justified" true belief sets out a distinctive understanding of the relation between "justified" true belief and knowledge. If we use "*X*" to stand for the form of *X* and "*x*" to stand for the objects of belief that participate in *X*, we can say that Plato's view is that "justified" true belief about *x* is not knowledge of *X*. Rather, the possession of knowledge of *X* is what "justifies" a true belief about *x*. Further, the fact that "justified" true belief is not the same as knowledge does not indicate that "justified" true belief needs another condition in order to identify it with knowledge. No other conditions are necessary because *no kind* of true belief will ever be knowledge. Though belief and knowledge are related in important ways they are two distinct *kinds* of things.

It is important to note that Plato thinks that true belief by itself does not necessarily involve the faculty of knowledge, for he claims that true belief is possible without knowledge. There is, for example, his statement that "all beliefs without knowledge are ugly. . . . The best of

them are blind. Or do men who believe something true without understanding [*noêsin*] seem to you any different from blind men who travel the right road?" (506c6–9). If knowledge were necessary for true belief, then it would be impossible for one to have a true belief without knowledge.

We can maintain the analysis of knowledge and "justified" true belief given above while admitting that some instances of (mere) true belief can be produced by luck. But just as Plato does not conclude that the intellect is not naturally fitted to rule because sometimes a person not ruled by their intellect makes a right decision or performs a good deed, so he need not deny that "justified" true beliefs naturally require the faculty of knowledge simply because some true beliefs are luckily formed without it. Furthermore, even among beliefs, "justified" true beliefs, which are necessarily formed by knowledge, are better guides to right action than true beliefs formed by chance. Plato denies that knowledge and "justification" are susceptible to luck, but the formation of *true belief* can sometimes be a matter of luck.

We noted above that some interpreters have objected to the idea that according to Plato the objects of knowledge and the objects of belief do not overlap. We can now see how Plato could think that one could not believe and know the same thing. For consider Plato's claim that there is no difference "between blind men and those men who are really deprived of the knowledge of what each thing is; those who have no clear pattern in the soul, and are hence unable—after looking off, as painters do, toward what is truest, and ever referring to it and contemplating it as precisely as possible—to give laws about what is fine, just, and good . . ." (484c4–d1). The contrast here is between the form of justice and all the various just laws. One has knowledge of the form of justice in order to form correct beliefs about which laws are just and unjust. The philosopher's true beliefs about laws that come into and go out of existence—

that is, their trust that these laws will contribute to the preservation of the city while those will not—are "justified" by their knowledge of the form of justice. Their belief is about one thing; their knowledge is about another.[96]

D. {19}–{20}: Making Mistakes and Not Making Mistakes

{19} Knowledge does not make mistakes.
{20} Belief makes mistakes.

Call this fragment "{D}." It is the first explicit comparison of knowledge and belief in the Argument. {19} and {20} together entail {21}, which when combined with other premises entails {22} and {23}, on which more in the next section. The discussion of {D} itself largely consists—and rightly so—of providing an explanation of why Plato thinks that {19} is true.

Despite being forty years old, Hintikka's explanation of this remains one of the most sophisticated available.[97] It will therefore be advantageous to spell out his account of Plato's view of knowledge and belief. There are three main points. First, knowledge and belief are understood primarily as goal-directed activities. Secondly, emphasizing the teleological nature of knowledge and belief leads to a blurring of the distinction between the faculties of knowledge and belief and what those faculties produce. Thirdly, the nature of the object of knowledge is the same as the nature of the product of knowledge: If the latter is infallible, the former must be something that can be infallibly conceived, which is to say that it must be immutable, eternal, perfect, and so on.

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96. The question of *how*, exactly, belief is supposed to be ruled by knowledge is parasitic on the question of how the nonrational parts of the soul are ruled by the rational. See above note 95.
97. Annas and Vlastos defend explanations similar to Hintikka's.

On the first point, according to Hintikka Plato adopts the ancient Greek conception of knowledge and belief as *goal-directed activities*.[98] That is to say, an analysis of knowledge and belief must explain what is produced by one's knowing and believing. Indeed, on Hintikka's account of the ancient conception of knowledge and belief, an analysis of them must proceed from the assumption that something is produced by one's activities of knowing and believing. This is in keeping with our claim above (section II.A.3) that knowledge and sight are similar because they both accomplish something.

Hintikka says that this leads to the second point:

> If in any event, thing, or phenomenon the essential feature is its end or aim or product or outcome, all talk of it will amount to talking of this end or outcome, this *telos* or *ergon*, and the difference between what is said of the phenomenon itself and what is said of its *telos* or *ergon* tends to be overshadowed.[99]

The key point of Hintikka's account of Plato's adoption and exploitation of the notion of knowledge and belief as goal-directed activities is that Plato tends to blur the distinction between the activity of, say, the faculty of knowledge itself and what that faculty produces.

The third and final feature of Hintikka's account is the connection between the objects of knowledge and belief and the products of knowledge and belief. In Plato, says Hintikka, this connection is such as to be a "tacit near-identification of the objects of knowledge and belief with the *erga* of the 'faculties' of knowledge and belief."[100] Hintikka does not think that Plato actually identified the objects of knowledge with its products, but he does think that Plato tends to conflate the two in expressing his epistemology.

This point emerges in the connection between the objects of the faculty of knowledge and the cognitive states it produces. As Hintikka says, the view of Plato, and Aristotle, is that "there

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98. On the teleological nature of knowledge and belief, see also Robinson, "Finding the Looked-for Object."
99. Hintikka, "Knowledge and Its Objects in Plato," 7.
100. Ibid., 13.

can be genuine knowledge only of what is unchangeable."[101] The basic idea is that since knowledge cannot change—it cannot become false—that which is known cannot change.[102]

Hintikka's account of these points of Platonic epistemology has much to recommend it. Indeed, apart from his claim that Plato tends to identify the objects of knowledge with the products of knowledge—a claim rebutted by Santas[103]—his account is helpful.

In addition to Santas's critique, however, Hintikka's account of Plato's epistemology falls short in another respect, namely, the notion that Plato more or less *assumes* the widespread view that the objects of knowledge are changeless. That this is not a concept Plato adopts with a certain degree of confusion is evidenced in the Argument itself by Plato's explicit contrast of his position with that of the lovers of sights and sounds. The contrast shows that he is quite aware of the possibility of thinking of the object of knowledge as something dissimilar to that which the faculty of knowledge produces. For the lovers of sights and sounds (and empiricists in general) do not think that sense-perceptible objects are unchanging, eternal, perfect, and so on, but they do think they are objects of knowledge, even infallible knowledge.[104]

This point raises an important question: Why do the lovers of sights and sounds agree with {19} if they do not agree that the objects of knowledge are changeless? They agree because, though Plato might think otherwise, there is no indication that they do not think that the objects of the faculties of knowledge and belief are necessarily tied to the mental states or

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101. Hintikka, "Time, Truth, and Knowledge in Ancient Greek Philosophy," 7.
102. Hintikka focuses on the temporal aspects of the objects of knowledge, i.e., an object of knowledge must be eternally what it is. Vlastos expresses a similar view though he emphasizes not the timelessness of the object of knowledge but its purity, i.e., its omitting any contrary properties; see "Degrees of Reality in Plato," 12–13.
103. Santas, "Hintikka on Knowledge and Its Objects in Plato," 37–42.
104. Note that in Plato's discussion of the thesis that knowledge is perception in the *Theaet*., the alleged proponents of that thesis assume that knowledge is of things that change. Of course, Plato argues that they radically underestimate the effect this assumption has on their thesis, but there is no worry on the part of the proponents of it as Hintikka's claims would lead us to expect.

representations produced by those faculties.[105] After all, Plato's view about the qualities a thing must have in order to be an object of knowledge is not one a person could arrive at without the kind of thought the lovers of sights and sounds are said to disdain.[106]

The forgoing suggests that, according to at least the lovers of sights and sounds, what lies behind {19}, or at least {19LSS}, is not a sophisticated account of why timeless, perfect objects are necessary for knowledge but a rather humdrum view of the relation between knowledge and truth—like the one Plato presents in the *Gorgias* without any controversy or hesitancy from the interlocutor, Gorgias, himself no Platonic rationalist: if you know, you cannot be wrong.[107]

Perhaps the lovers of sights and sounds ought to understand that in the final analysis they cannot think that knowledge does not make mistakes without also thinking that the objects of knowledge are unchanging. (As Hintikka notes, however, many modern epistemologists defend the notion that changing things can be known.[108] The lovers of sights and sounds are not obviously in the wrong, though they are mistaken as far as Plato is concerned.) In any case, in the Argument the lovers of sights and sounds do not accept Plato's view, and so seem to adopt the notion that if you know you cannot be wrong.

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105. This, by the way, constitutes a good objection to the veridical reading, which requires the lovers of sights and sounds to make that connection.
106. Hintikka shows that although certain widely accepted notions about knowledge among ancient Greeks made certain positions more plausible to them, the positions of Plato and Aristotle are nonetheless the product of a good deal of thought; see "Time, Truth, and Knowledge in Ancient Greek Philosophy," 6–9.
107. *Gorg*. 454d; see also *Meno* 97d–e; *Ion* 537e; *Theaet*. 152c, 186e. The point in the *Gorg*. about the infallibility of knowledge, however, is not a complete support for the point in question in *Rep*. 5. The point in question is whether the *power* (*dynamis*) of knowledge is infallible. The point made in the *Gorg*. is that knowledge (in some way) entails truth. In the *Gorg*., no specification about knowledge as a power is made. In the *Rep*., the specification that knowledge is a power is a crucial part of the argument. On this point, my interpretation must remain in some suspense, even though I do not think the move from the principle of the *Gorg*. to that of the *Rep*. is very great. Gosling also seems to think that the account of an infallible power would not be objectionable to the lovers of sights and sounds ("*Doxa* and *Dynamis* in Plato's *Republic*," 125).
108. Hintikka, "Time, Truth, and Knowledge in Ancient Greek Philosophy," 2–3.

E. {21}–{23}: Establishing the Difference between Knowledge and Belief

So, {21} Belief and knowledge accomplish different things. [19, 20]
So, {22} Belief and knowledge are over different things. [15, 17, 18, 21]
So, {23} Knowledge and belief are different faculties. [13, 21, 22]

Call this fragment "{E}." {E} is the conclusion of the Argument up to this point, and {23} is the most important conclusion reached so far because it is used to infer {33}. There is no need to disambiguate {21}–{23} because none of the premises involve '*einai*.'

The reasoning for both versions of {E} is valid, and both Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds think that their respective versions of {1}–{23} are sound. Plato, however, as we noted in the previous section, does not think that the LSS version of {1}–{23} is sound because he does not think that {19} is true on {6LSS}. But Plato is not attempting to refute the lovers of sights and sounds by arguing that the LSS version is simply unsound. Part of this has to do with the difficulty of straightforwardly convincing the lovers of sights and sounds that {6LSS} is false. He is instead aiming to produce an invalid argument on the LSS version. On this, his indebtedness to the Socratic elenchus is evident because it is much easier to show someone that two premises contradict than it is to show that either of the premises is false.

We should pause to note that {22} (= {22LSS}) is one of the premises that generates the invalidity in the LSS version of the Argument. The other two premises are{7LSS} and {48LSS}.

F. {24}–{32}: Belief and Ignorance

So, {24} Belief is not over 'that which is'. [7, 22]
{25} Belief is over something.
{26} If belief is over something, then belief is not over nothing.
So, {27} Belief is not over nothing. [25, 26]
{28} 'That which not is' is nothing.
So, {29} Belief is not over 'that which not is'. [27, 28]
{30} Ignorance is over 'that which not is'. [8]
{31} Ignorance is a faculty. [implicit]
So, {32} Belief and ignorance are different faculties. [13, 14, 15, 17, 29, 30, 31]

Call this fragment "{F}." It contains a number of premises that can be disambiguated, though {24} is the only one that really needs to be because Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds agree about the meaning of 'that which not is'. But for completeness:

{24P} Belief is not over the forms.

{29P} Belief is not over nothing.

{30P} Ignorance is over nothing.

And:

{24LSS} Belief is not over sense-perceptible objects.

{29LSS} Belief is not over nothing.

{30LSS} Ignorance is over nothing.

The main question concerning {F} is why Plato argues from a difference in objects in order to distinguish ignorance and belief, in contrast with arguing from a difference in what the faculties accomplish when he distinguishes knowledge and belief. One notes, for instance, the lack of reference to the objects of knowledge and belief in {D} and {E} and the lack of reference to what ignorance accomplishes in {F}, though clearly {20} remains true in {F}.

There are three reasons for the difference in the way Plato distinguishes these things. First, in the case of the distinction between knowledge and belief Plato does not want to beg any questions about the division of objects between knowledge and belief. The final conclusions of the Argument, {53} and {55}, express the fruition of the principle agreed to in {22}, which is inferred from {15}, {17}, {18}, and {21}. It would therefore defeat Plato's purpose to simply assert that knowledge and belief have different objects because after the lovers of sights and sounds have seen the invalid nature of the LSS version of the Argument they could simply decide to reject such an assertion. But the way Plato argues requires the lovers of sights and

sounds to reject {C} and {D} if they want to deny that knowledge and belief have different objects. They do not reject {C} and {D} because of their commitment to the importance of sense-perception. For this reason Plato argues that knowledge and belief accomplish different things in order to conclude that their objects are different. Of course, this interpretation depends on the truth of {15}, but we have given good reasons to think that the lovers of sights and sounds accept {15LSS} as true.

Secondly, again in the case of knowledge and belief, because Plato does not want to specify the objects of knowledge and belief he argues from the fact that they accomplish different things. An important reason Plato does not distinguish knowledge and belief is that he does not want to specify the objects of knowledge and belief. The more Plato uses 'that which is' and 'that which not is' the more he invites questions about what those expressions actually refer to. The more Plato avoids them in Part One, the better for him.

Thirdly, in the case of the distinction between ignorance and belief Plato takes advantage of the fact that the lovers of sights and sounds agree with him about the object of ignorance. Since Plato agrees with the lovers of sights and sounds that the object of ignorance is nothing—compare the explicit admission in {28} with the absence of anything similar for knowledge and belief—distinguishing between belief and ignorance on the basis of their objects is acceptable to both parties in a way that is lacking in the distinction between knowledge and belief.

If the above reasoning is correct, and if (i) Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds take their respective versions of {C} to be valid and sound and their respective versions of {7} and {8} to be true, then we can see how they would think that their respective versions of {F} are valid and sound.

G. {33}–{38}: Belief between Knowledge and Ignorance

So, {33} Belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge. [23, 32]
{34} Belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge.
{35} Belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance.
{36} If (i) belief is neither ignorance nor knowledge and (ii) belief is not outside ignorance or knowledge and (iii) belief appears darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance, then belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [implicit]
So, {37} Belief lies between knowledge and ignorance. [33, 34, 35, 36]
So, {38} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it. [11, 37]

Call this fragment "{G}." {38} is the final conclusion of Part One. It is that to which Part One has been building, but it needs to be disambiguated. The options are

{38P} If there is a sense-perceptible object, then belief is over it.

{38LSS} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it.

From this disambiguation we can see that {38P} already expresses Plato's notion concerning the proper object of belief. On the other hand, {38LSS} expresses the opaque nature of our (and Plato's) understanding of the view of the lovers of sights and sounds.[109]

On the argument for {38}: First, {33} is validly inferred from

{23} Knowledge and belief are different faculties

and

{32} Belief and ignorance are different faculties.

Unlike {33}, premises {34}, {35}, and {36} are assumed. The difficulty with these premises is parasitic on the difficulty noted in the section on '*metaxu*' above: there is no account of why the lovers of sights and sounds should accept any of these premises, especially {36}. Thus, the concept expressed by '*metaxu*' according to the lovers of sights and sounds remains obscure, and on our analysis of the Argument what they think that means remains inscrutable.

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109. On the LSS version of 'to be' and 'not to be', see above section II.B.

However, it should not be doubted that Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds believe their respective versions of Part One are sound because they think they have a grasp on the meaning of '*metaxu*.' Nor should it be doubted that Plato thinks that what the lovers of sights and sounds mean to express by '*metaxu*' is ultimately irrelevant to the success of the Argument.

III. Conclusion

Concerning the Argument, we have seen how Part One establishes both the Platonic and the LSS versions of the following important conclusions:

{7} Knowledge is over 'that which is';

{22} Knowledge and belief are over different things; and

{38} If there is something that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it.

Concerning Plato's accounts of the relation between the subject and the object of knowledge and the differences between knowledge and belief are varied and unique. In the first place, he seems to employ the concept of a single relation, the *epi* relation, that combines aspects of the relation between faculties and formal objects and the relation between cognitive states and intentional objects. We tend to distinguish these relations, and Plato's treatment of them as a single thing is for the most part foreign to us. Plato's concept of knowledge is also foreign—at least it cannot be easily characterized by referring to the current usual distinctions about knowledge. We have argued that although Plato relies extensively on the seeing-knowing parallel, he thinks that knowledge is unlike sense perception because knowledge enables one to explain what one knows whereas sense perception does not.

Concerning belief, we have argued that the chief characteristic of belief is instability and that belief is primarily characterized by the trust in or readiness to act on what one believes. When one has knowledge of *X*, one's beliefs about *x* are true and "justified."

CHAPTER 3

THE ARGUMENT: PART TWO

I. Introduction

What are the objects of knowledge? What are the objects of belief? Plato's goal in Part Two is to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds, and anyone else sympathetic to their position,[1] that they are mistaken about what the objects of knowledge and belief are. Although the lovers of sights and sounds lack a conception of what is both 'to be' and 'not to be', prior to Part Two they think that sense-perceptible objects are the objects of knowledge. The goal of Part Two is to correct them on this point, and Plato proceeds by doing what he deliberately avoided in Part One. He secures agreement about the specifications of 'what is' and what is both 'to be' and 'not to be'. In their agreement, the lovers of sights and sounds are shown that because sense-perceptible objects are always both *F* and not-*F*, they fit the description of the objects of belief, not knowledge.

As noted in the introduction to the previous chapter, the present discussion of the Argument does not defend one (or more) of the interpretations of '*einai*' because Plato's use of it in the Argument is intentionally ambiguous. We also noted in that introduction the Platonic version of the Argument expresses Plato's views about metaphysics and epistemology, at least as far as they are stated in the *Republic*. This means that in order to give a sufficiently comprehensive account of the Argument, when we come to analyses of, say, {47} and {47P} we must explain why Plato thinks that every sense-perceptible object is both *F* and not-*F*.

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1. Note that at *Rep*. 479d2, Plato refers to those with mixed-up opinions about the nature of the objects of knowledge and belief not simply as the "strange" (475d1) class of lovers of sights and sounds, but as "the many." See also 493e2–494a4: "'Can a multitude accept or believe that the fair itself, rather than the many fair things, or that anything itself, *is*, rather than the many particular things?' 'Not in the least,' he said. 'Then it's impossible,' I said, 'that a multitude be philosophic.' 'Yes, it is impossible.'"

II. Part Two

The starting point of Part Two is, naturally, the end of Part One:

{38} If there is an *X* that is both 'to be' and 'not to be', then belief is over it.

As we have seen, the Platonic understanding of this conclusion is expressed as follows:

{38P} If there is a sense-perceptible object, then belief is over it.

As we have also seen, the lovers of sights and sounds do not have a grasp on the kind of thing that can be described as both 'to be' and 'not to be'. Prior to {47LSS} they neither have a clear conception of what such a thing is nor can they point to the objects in their everyday experience that fit the description of being both 'to be' and 'not to be', a point emphasized by the hypothetical nature of {38LSS}. As noted in chapter 1, section V.B.1, their interest in discovering what things are both 'to be' and 'not to be' provides the motivation for the lovers of sights and sounds to participate in the Argument.

The present interpretation of the Argument holds that there are essentially two arguments, one that encapsulates Plato's understanding of '*einai*' and another that does the same for the lovers of sights and sounds. The difference between them is that the former version is valid whereas the latter is not. It has an inconsistency caused by the assumptions made by the lovers of sights and sounds about the objects of knowledge and belief. As described in chapter 1, section V.B.2.b, the argument against the lovers of sights and sounds has the following logical structure:

(I) {LSSA1}, {LSSA2}, and {LSSA3}.

(II) {1LSS}–{47LSS}.

(III) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{6LSS}, then {7LSS}.

(IV) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{21LSS}, then {22LSS}.

(V) If {LSSA1}–{LSSA3} and {1LSS}–{47LSS}, then {48LSS}.

(VI) If {7LSS} and {48LSS}, then ~{22LSS}.

(VII) {22LSS} and ~{22LSS}.

(VIII) Therefore, ~{LSSA1}.

For the reader's ease, the inconsistent premises are stated here:

{7LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects.

{22LSS} Belief and knowledge are over different things.

{48LSS} Belief is over sense-perceptible objects.

The goal of this section, then, is to explain the reasoning behind Part Two. There are two main parts to this chapter: section A, which covers {39}–{47}, and section B, which covers {48}–{55}. The main topic of the first section is Plato's understanding of what it means in the present context for something to be both *F* and not-*F*. Our discussion of the second section will focus primarily on arguing that the Argument is not intended to be a straightforward argument for the existence of forms.

A. {39}–{47}: All the Many Things

{39} All the many beautiful things appear ugly and beautiful.
{40} All the many just things appear unjust and just.
{41} All the many holy things appear unholy and holy.
{42} All the many doubles appear half and double.
{43} All the many large things appear small and large.
{44} All the many small things appear large and small.
{45} All the many light things appear heavy and light.
{46} All the many heavy things appear light and heavy.
So, {47} All the many things are 'to be' and 'not to be'. [39–46]

Call this fragment "{H}." Unlike the other fragments of the Argument, {H} is an inductive argument. There are four issues with {H}. The first is the move from "appears" to "is." The second is the sense in which sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F*. The third is the

move from "the many things" to "sense-perceptible objects." And the fourth is the fallout from disambiguating {47}. These will be addressed in the four sections below.

(1) From "Appears" to "Is"

The first difficulty in {H} is explaining Plato's shift from a thing's appearing *F* and not-*F* in premises {39}–{46} to a thing's being *F* and not-*F* in {47}. As has been pointed out by commentators, '*phainetai*' (479a6, b1, b3) can be used in two ways.[2] When '*phainetai*' is accompanied by an infinitive it lacks a veridical nuance: *X* appears to be (but is not, or at least might not be) *F*.[3] When '*phainetai*' is accompanied by a participle it has a veridical nuance: *X* is observed to actually be *F*.[4] Thus, there are two options for interpreting the relevant passages in Part Two:

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2. See, e.g., Irwin, "The Theory of Forms," 154n10, and Bostock, *Plato's* Phaedo, 73–4.
3. Passages in the *Rep*. that reflect the nonveridical nuance, though not necessarily through the infinitive construction, are 337c5 ("And even granting that it's not similar, but *appears* like it is to the man who is asked, do you think he'll any the less answer what appears to him, whether we forbid him to or not?"), 452a7 ("Perhaps . . . compared to what is habitual, many of the things now being said would *appear* ridiculous if they were to be done as is said"; cf. 452d: "what was ridiculous to the eyes disappeared in the light of what's best as revealed in speeches"), 557c7 ("this regime [the democratic one] . . . would also *appear* fairest, and many perhaps . . . would judge this to be the fairest regime"), 584a7 ("but when it is next to the painful, repose *looks* pleasant and next to the pleasant, painful; and in these *appearances* there is nothing sound, so far as truth of pleasure goes, only a certain wizardry"), 586c2 ("Each takes its color by contrast with the others, so that they *appear* vivid and give birth to frenzied loves of themselves"), 588e1 ("so that to the man who's not able to see what's inside, but sees only the outer shell, it [the tripartite soul] *appears* as one animal, a human being"), 596e4 "Yes . . . so that they *look* like they are; however, they surely are not in truth"), 596e11 ("he [the painter] too makes what *appears* like a couch"), 598b3 ("Toward which is painting directed in each case—toward imitation of the being as it is or toward its *appearing* as it *appears*? Is it imitation of *appearance* or of truth? Of *appearance*"; cf. 598a), and 602d8 ("As a result of them [measuring, counting, weighing] we are not ruled by a thing's *appearing* bigger or smaller or more or heavier; rather we are ruled by that which has calculated, measured, or, if you please, weighed").
4. Passages in the *Rep*. that reflect the veridical nuance, though not necessarily through the participial construction, are 412d10 ("Then we must select . . . the sort of men who, upon our consideration . . . *appear* as if they were entirely eager to do what they believe to be advantageous to the city . . ."), 454d9 ("if either the class of men or that of women *shows* its superiority in some art or other practice, the we'll say that that art must be assigned to it. But if they *appear* as though they differ in this alone . . . we'll assert that it has not thereby yet been proved that a woman differs from a man with respect to what we're talking about"), 484b9 ("Those who *appear* as if they're capable of guarding the laws and practices of cities should be established as guardians"), 491c7–9 ("grasp it correctly as a whole, and it will *appear* perfectly plain to you, and what was said about them before won't seem strange"), 503a1, 4 ("they must *show* themselves to be lovers of the city, tested in pleasures and pains, and that they must *show* that they don't cast out this conviction in labors or fears or any other reverse"), 508d ("it [the soul] understands, knows, and *appears* to possess understanding"), 524e3 ("But if some opposition to it is always seen at the same time, so that

(*a*) *X* appears to be *F* and not-*F* = *X* merely appears to be but may or may not be *F* and not-*F*.

(*b*) *X* appears to be *F* and not-*F* = *X* appears and actually is *F* and not-*F*.

The difficulty posed by the text of the Argument is that neither the infinitive nor the participle is present. The decision between the (*a*) and (*b*) readings must be made on other grounds.

As others have noted, if the (*a*) reading is correct, then the Argument, in both the Platonic and LSS versions, is fallacious in an obvious way.[5] This point by itself strongly recommends the (*b*) reading. We should, however, keep in mind that these readings concern only the meaning of the word '*phainetai*' in {H}. That is, the (*b*) reading does not express a metaphysical thesis about the relation between appearance and reality. It only says that in the context of {H}, '*phainetai*' should be understood as '*einai*.' We must insist on this reading or else overturn our previous conclusion that the lovers of sights and sounds do not necessarily eliminate the distinction between appearance and reality, and this for two reasons. First, the (*b*) reading taken as a metaphysical thesis amounts to a repudiation of our previous conclusion.[6] Secondly, it flies in the face of Plato's commitment to a distinction between what is so and what merely appears to be so.

(2) On the Sense in which the Many Things Are and Are Not

(a) Being F *from one point of view and not*-F *from another.* Although we argued in chapter 1, section IV.B, that Plato purposefully leaves the meaning of '*einai*' ambiguous in Part One, we have now arrived at the one point in the Argument at which the disputes over '*einai*' are relevant. In summing up the conclusion of the argument from 479a–479b (={39}–{46}), Plato

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nothing *appears* as though it were one more than the opposite of one, then there would now be need of something to judge"), 537a10 ("the boy who *appears* himself always readiest must be chosen to join a select number"), and 537b6 ("And . . . one of their tests, and that not the least, is what each will *show* himself to be in gymnastic").

5. See, e.g., Rickless, *Plato's Forms in Transition*, 39n37, and Irwin, "The Theory of Forms," 155.

6. See chapter 2, section II.A.4.

says, "Then each of the many things no more *is* than *is not* whatever one might say it is" (479b8–9). This sentence expresses Plato's view that the difference between forms and sense-perceptible objects can be explained by the fact that the forms simply *are* whereas sense-perceptible objects both *are* and *are not*.

Before we delve into the dispute over the meaning of '*einai*,' we should note that our inquiry has a much more limited scope than that which is traditionally assumed to be in view in the Argument. We are, after all, only investigating the meaning of '*einai*' in 479b8–9, and we can leave the meaning of '*einai*' in Part One out of our account because there is no necessary connection between the meaning of '*einai*' at 479b8–9 and its meaning in Part One.[7] Although Plato's uses of '*einai*' in Parts One and Two are consistent, this is not primarily on account of the semantic properties of '*einai*,' but on account of his metaphysical theory of the relation between forms and sense-perceptible objects. Moreover, there is no need to make the lover's of sights and sounds use of '*einai*' in Part Two consistent with Plato's use.

As often happens, simplifying the scope of inquiry makes defending a proposed answer much easier. In the case of the meaning of '*einai*' in 479b8–9, the meaning is rather plainly predicative, as opposed to simply existential or veridical: sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F*.[8] The passage leading up to Plato's summary statement makes his meaning plain:

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7. Cf. chapter 1, section IV.B.2.
8. See chapter 1, section IV.B.1. Although the way in which Plato uses '*einai*' in "*S* is *P*" locutions is, thanks to Kahn et al., fairly clear, the text of the *Rep*. does not make it clear how Plato understands sentences of the form "*S* is not *P*." We can see why by reviewing Plato's understanding of '*einai*' in affirmative predicative contexts. According to Kahn—who is primarily responsible for advancing the thesis that Plato thinks that *to exist* is, properly speaking, *to be a subject for predication*; for a concise statement of Kahn's views, see his "A Return to the Theory of the Verb *Be* and the Concept of Being," and for a similar account, limited to the *Soph*., see also Brown, "Being in the *Sophist*," 457–67—Plato does not make a sharp division between the existential and predicative uses of '*einai*.' (Gonzalez, e.g., criticizes Vlastos on precisely these grounds; see "Propositions or Objects?" 259n25.) One conclusion often drawn from Kahn's thesis is that the instances of 'is' in Plato's claims that something both 'is' and 'is not' can have existential meaning. The idea is that existence can be a matter of *degree* in the sense that a thing can both be *F* and not-*F*.

> "No, but of necessity," he said, "they appear somehow both beautiful and ugly, and likewise for the others you ask about."
>
> "What about the many doubles? Do they appear any less half than double?"
>
> "Not at all."
>
> "And the things we would say are large, small, light, heavy—will they be addressed by these any more than the opposites?"
>
> "No," he said, "but each will always have both."
>
> "Then each of the many things no more is than is not whatever one might say it is?" (479a8–b9)

This context also explains why the lovers of sights and sounds agree without objection to Plato's predicative use of '*einai*.'[9]

This conclusion is not entirely persuasive. Although Kahn (with Brown, Gonzalez, et al.) is right to note the connection between existential and predicative uses of '*einai*', it is not clear that that connection explains how Plato can think of existence as admitting of degrees. A typical explanation is that a beautiful statue, e.g., may be both beautiful (in some respects) and ugly (in other respects), but it does not seem possible for it to be a subject for predication and not be a subject for predication, which is one implication of saying that *x* is *F* and not-*F* on Kahn's view.

To be more precise: It is clear that, according to Kahn's analysis, Plato's use of sentences of the form "*S* is *P*" should be understood as follows:

S is *P* = *S* is existent as a *P*.

But it is not as easy to discern how to parse the negative version of this form, i.e., "*S* is not *P*." Three possibilities present themselves:

(i) *S* is existent as a not-*P*.
(ii) *S* is not existent as a *P*.
(iii) *S* is not existent as a not-*P*.

It is on this point that the text of the *Rep*. is unclear. Kahn expresses affinity for both (ii) and (iii). In his earlier "Some Philosophical Uses of 'To Be' in Plato," he writes that "the negative *to mê on* here [that is, in the Argument] . . . is to be understood as equivalent to the conjunction of two corresponding negations: what does not exist and is not *F*, for any value of *F*; i.e., what has no properties at all. (This is the view of *to mê on* that Plato will reject in the *Sophist*.)" (Kahn, "Some Philosophical Uses of 'To Be' in Plato," 130n18. There is some puzzle about this statement inasmuch as the first part claims that the alleged subject does not exist but Kahn's gloss, "what has no properties at all," suggests that the subject does exist.) In the later "A Return to the Theory of the Verb *Be* and the Concept of Being," he writes that "positing the subject as something to talk about is an essential element of subject-predicate assertions, so that some claim of existence for the subject is implicit in all affirmative S.-P. sentences. (I leave aside the case of negative sentences as more problematic. *We may think of the negation as potentially nullifying any claim of existence for the subject*.)" (Kahn, "A Return to the Theory of the Verb *Be* and the Concept of Being," 384 (emphasis added). Later he writes, "In [sentences of the form "*S* is *P*"] the verb *einai* serves to posit (or, in the negative, to exclude) an indefinite subject (*someone*, *something*) for the predication formulated in the relative clause that follows" (394)). Regardless of whether Kahn opts for (ii) or (iii) it is clear that he does not opt for (i), which is the only one that avoids the paradox of a subject for predication that both exists and does not exist. Of course, (i) expresses the gist of the position Plato adopts in the *Soph*., and perhaps it should be followed in the Argument. But the fanfare with which Plato announces his discovery of (i)—or something close to it—in the *Soph*. tends to make that suggestion implausible, though not impossible. Plato the dramatist could be revealing what he has thought all along about *to mê on*. Hence, although it is wrong to deny that a predicative use of '*einai*' always disallows an existential use as well, the connection between the existential and predicative uses cannot by itself adequately justify the coherence of Plato's "'is' and 'is not'" locutions.

9. Although commentators who want to defend a predicative reading of '*einai*' in Part One often claim that the absence of a predicate in the '*einai*' constructions can be explained by Plato's use of ellipsis, Kahn has noted that the

What is less clear is Plato's reason for thinking that each sense-perceptible object "will always have both," that is, will always have both a property and its opposite. Beautiful sense-perceptible objects will always be "somehow" (479a8) ugly, just ones always unjust, and so on.[10]

In the main, commentators have looked to other Platonic dialogues, notably the *Symposium*, for Plato's explanations of why a sense-perceptible object will always be both *F* and not-*F*. We will shortly follow suit, but we should not think that the context of the Argument provides *no* indication of why Plato thinks sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F*. In particular, in making this point Plato relies on the fact that the lovers of sights and sounds have extensive experience of attending to sense-perceptible objects, and the experience he most likely thinks they will agree with him is that a thing can appear one way from one point of view and another way from different point of view.[11]

Hintikka's argument that the ancient Greek concept of knowledge was modeled on first-person perception supports the suggestion that Plato could rely on the lovers of sights and sounds to think of knowledge and the object of knowledge in perspectival terms.[12] Although we have seen in chapter 2, section II.A.3, that the seeing–knowing parallel is not endorsed by Plato without qualification, it does seem to hold without qualification for the lovers of sights and

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predicate use with an ellipse almost always happens in a context where "the same or a very similar form actually appears in the context, usually in a parallel construction, and is thus easily 'understood' in the place where a form is omitted" (*The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, 67; cf. Stokes's criticism that "it is not clear why Plato should be so elliptical as [the predicative interpretation] makes him and yet fail to illustrate his meaning at the outset; nor how he expected the poor sightlover to understand" ("Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 290n7)). In contrast, Plato's predicative use at 479b8–9 is a textbook example of ellipsis in ancient Greek.

10. Patterson (*Image and Reality in Plato's Metaphysics*, 101–3) argues that being *F* and not-*F* is sufficient for being a sense-perceptible object, but not necessary. There are other, according to Patterson, more encompassing, ways of falling short of being a form. In the Argument, however, being *F* and not-*F* is Plato's way of distinguishing sense-perceptible objects from forms because it is amenable to a perspectival analysis.

11. Glaucon, e.g., assumes that when Socrates refers to the sense-perceptible objects that summon thought (523a10–b1) he has in mind "things that appear from far off . . . and shadow paintings" (523b5–6). Socrates corrects his mistake, but the point stands that these examples were ones people could readily think of.

12. Hintikka, "Knowledge and Its Objects in Plato," 20: "It is in fact the case, it seems to me, that the Greeks tended to think of epistemic matters in terms of someone's particular vantage-point in space and especially in time." See also Hintikka, "Time, Truth, and Knowledge in Ancient Greek Philosophy."

sounds, who assume a close connection between perceiving and knowing. Since to perceive *F* is always to perceive *F* from a certain point of view, so, for the lovers of sights and sounds at least, knowing *F* entails knowing *F from a certain point of view*. Therefore, let us say that according to the lovers of sights and sounds, knowledge of sense-perceptible objects is perspectival.

It is one thing to say that knowledge of sense-perceptible objects is perspectival. It is another to say that there are perspectival properties, that is, real properties of *being* F *from a certain point of view*. Why should the lovers of sights and sounds think that sense-perceptible objects have properties like that? To this, a clever lover of sights and sounds might reply: Why think that there are sense-perceptible properties that are *not* perspectival? The first question assumes that perspectival properties can be contrasted with other sorts of properties, but that assumption makes sense only if there are objects that can be known apart from any vantage point, which the lovers of sights and sounds deny.[13] Of course, Plato does not necessarily (or obviously) deny that there are proper perspectives of some sense-perceptible objects, but he holds what the lover of sights and sounds adamantly and ultimately denies, namely, that such proper perspective can be established by appealing to non-sensible properties.[14] Thus, in addition to having a perspectival account of knowledge, the lovers of sights and sounds hold that there are perspectival properties that can be treated as inseparably connected to sense-perceptible objects because they do not admit non-perspectival properties.[15]

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13. This is not to go back on the claim that the lovers of sights and sounds think that there are appearances that are more or less complete (see chapter 2, section II.A.4). The present point only implies that whatever the lovers of sights and sounds consider as better and worse perspectives will still be perspectives.
14. At least, the lovers of sights and sounds do not admit non-perspectival properties for the properties listed in {H}. The lovers of sights and sounds could consistently believe that some properties (of length and weight, for example) are not perspectival, but that belief would not overturn the argument in {H}, which is all that Plato needs to establish.
15. White argues that Plato does not think that it is correct to say that *being* F *from a certain point of view* is a property of *F*. *Being* F *from a certain point of view* is instead a "condition of acceptable use" ("Perceptual and

(b) Vlastos on F *and not*-F. As it happens, Vlastos challenges the idea that Plato should think that sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F* because they are *F* from one point of view but not from another. Our interpretation will be sharpened by noting and responding to Vlastos's criticisms.

As Vlastos notes, Plato provides a clear explanation of why sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F* in the *Symposium*.[16] At 211a we read that the beautiful itself is not

(*A*) beautiful in one respect, ugly in another; nor

(*B*) beautiful at one time, ugly at another; nor

(*C*) beautiful in relation to some things, ugly in relation to others; nor

(*D*) beautiful in one place, ugly someplace else; nor

(*E*) beautiful for some people, ugly for others.

This helps us see the ways in which Plato thought something could be both *F* and not-*F*, which Vlastos summarizes in the following way:

(1) Since a particular, *a*, has various properties—color, smell, taste, weight, and so forth—that belong to it only by empirical conjunction and not by logical

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Objective Properties in Plato," 51). E.g., says White, "if you press a loaf of bread just after pressing a block of steel, it will typically be unacceptable for you to judge that the loaf is hard. It will typically be acceptable, however, to judge that it is hard just after you have pressed a feather pillow. If we accept these facts at face value, then we need to conclude that whereas the content expressed by the sentence, 'This loaf is hard', makes no reference to the surrounding circumstances, a statement of its conditions of the acceptability must make such a reference" (ibid.). In the present context, the relevant point is that a thing's being beautiful from one point of view but not another is not a matter of the thing's having different properties but of there being different conditions of acceptable use for "beautiful." If White's analysis is correct, there is nothing preventing my interpretation from being recast in terms of conditions of acceptable use rather than properties. Indeed, White's point in "Perceptual and Objective Properties in Plato" is that Plato's talk of *being* F *from a certain point of view* should be taken as referring not to properties but to conditions of acceptable use.

16. Cf. *Phdo*. 74b6–c2: "Don't equal stones and sticks, the same ones, sometimes appear equal to one man, to another man not? . . . Have the equals themselves ever appeared unequal to you, or equality [ever appeared to be] inequality?" See Penner's discussion of this passage in defense of this interpretation of the phrase "appear equal to one man, to another man not" against Owen's attempt ("A Proof in the *Peri Ideon*") to interpret it as "appear equal to one stick, and not to another stick." For a different criticism of Owen's interpretation, see White, "Perceptual and Objective Properties in Plato."

connection, *a* can be *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* with respect to one of its properties (color, smell, and so forth) and not-*F* with respect to others.

(2) Since *a* is a temporal thing, there is no logical connection between every property it has at t_1 and every property it has at t_2. Thus, it is possible that *a* is *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* at t_1 and not-*F* at t_2.

(3) Since *a* is an object that stands in various relations to various things, there is no logical connection between every property it has in relation R_1 and every property it has in relation R_2. Thus, it is possible that *a* is *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* in relation to *x* and not-*F* in relation to *y* (if *x* and *y* are not identical).

(4) Since *a* is a spatial object, there is no logical connection between the properties it has (or appears to have) in location l_1 and the properties it has (or appears to have) in l_2. Thus, it is possible that *a* is *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* at l_1 and not-*F* at l_2.[17]

What we have called the "perspectival" nature of sense-perceptible objects is captured by Vlastos's (3) and (4).

Now, with the exception of (3), Vlastos thinks that these points make good sense of why Plato treats sensible instances of the forms as less real than the forms, which means that the forms are suitable objects of knowledge whereas the sensible instances are not. Vlastos's criticism of (3) might seem irrelevant to us, but, as we will see, if his criticism of (3) is warranted, it also extends, despite his claims to the contrary, to (1), (2), and (4). Hence, we need to defend (3) against Vlastos's criticisms in order to keep the others—in particular, (4)—in the clear. In what follows, we will first summarize Vlastos's criticisms of (3), then show how these criticisms extend to (1), (2), and (4), and finally show why the criticisms of (3) are mistaken.

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17. Vlastos conflates the fourth and fifth points from the *Symp*.

The difficulty with (3), according to Vlastos, is that it illegitimately infers

(*Q*) *x* is *F* and not-*F*

from

(*R*) *x* is *F* in relation to *y*, and not-*F* in relation to *z*.[18]

According to Vlastos this inference is illegitimate for two reasons: (i) it allows us to mislead by saying that the Empire State Building is short because it is shorter than the Sears Tower[19] and (ii) it applies equally to forms.[20]

Vlastos thinks that the first reason is sufficiently obvious: the Empire State Building is not short, and any reasoning leading to that conclusion must be mistaken.

Secondly, Vlastos argues that on an argument based on (3)

> some Forms could also be said to be *F* and not-*F* on exactly the same ground. For the number (i.e. the Form), *Six*, is greater than *Four* and smaller than *Twelve*; and the kind (i.e. the Form), *Quadruped*, is greater than *Horse*, but smaller than *Animal*. So on that reckoning the Forms, *Six*, and *Quadruped*, would each be great and not great. This type of argument then had better be dropped.[21]

In light of these points, Vlastos states that Plato should not have adopted (3) as good grounds for saying that sensible particulars are *F* and not-*F*. On Vlastos's view, however, expunging (3) does no real harm to Plato's account because (1), (2), and (4) are sufficient to establish sensible particulars as *F* and not-*F*; that is, the remaining three are sufficient to establish that sensible particulars are less real than the forms because their specific *F* and not-*F* formulas never apply to forms.[22]

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18. Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato," 14–15.
19. The example is mine; Vlastos's is about Simmias being shorter than Phaedo.
20. Ibid., 14.
21. Ibid., 16.
22. "[Plato does] not need this form of argument, since the other three grounds suffice to make the case for your contention that the *F* and not-*F* formula applies to sensibles, but never to Forms" (ibid.).

(*c*) *Response to Vlastos.* Vlastos, however, is partially but significantly mistaken about this. It is true that the second argument against (3) does not apply to (1), (2), and (4), but if the first argument against (3) is successful, then it also works against the other three ways of explicating what it means to be *F* and not-*F*.[23]

For example, if it is illegitimate to infer (*Q*) from (R), then it is just as problematic to infer

(*Q*) *x* is *F* and not-*F*

from

(*T*) *x* is *F* at t_1 and not-*F* at t_2.

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23. This does not mean that the third argument is a good one. In fact, it is not. Vlastos's third objection to the inference from (*R*) to (*Q*) is that (3) applies equally to the forms. Recall that

(3) *a* is *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* in relation to *x* and not-*F* in relation to *y*.

But, says Vlastos, suppose *a* is the form of two. Then

(3*FT*) the form of two is great and small because it is great in relation to the form of one and small in relation to the form of four.

This argument, however, is only good if the forms of smaller numbers stand in the successor relation to greater numbers. But there is no good evidence that Plato thinks this is the case. (This is especially the case if Plato believes in mathematical intermediates. The mathematical intermediates are the entities that do all the arithmetical work of having mathematical properties. On the view that Plato believes in the intermediates, the purpose of introducing them is to avoid saying that the forms themselves enter into mathematical relations.) The confusion here comes from assuming that the form of two is like the number two in every respect. But one respect in which they differ is that the form of two does not stand in the successor relation to the form of one. See Wedberg, *Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics*, 120–1: "The notions of arithmetic are not defined for the Ideal Numbers. Under a certain hypothesis, the truth about the numbers must rather be what Plato used to say, and 'the numbers [i.e., Ideal Numbers] must not be associable with one another' [Aristotle, *Meta*. 1083a31–5]. The 'inassociability' of Plato's Ideal Numbers, which is here stated, seems to mean that they do not stand in arithmetical relations to one another (e.g., the relation 'less than') . . . ."

Vlastos also suggests the following possibility:

(3*FQ*) the form of quadruped is great and small because it is great in relation to the form of horse but small in relation to the form of animal.

Vlastos explains that "Plato . . . speaks of 'great' or 'small' kinds, or parts of kinds, in the *Politicus* (e.g. 262a, 265a)" (Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato," 16n2). The difficulty with this is Vlastos's appeal to the *Stat*. to explain how one form can be greater than another. The problem is not that the *Stat*. was written later than the middle-period dialogues, which contain no account of how one form could be greater than another. The problem is that Plato's conception of the forms in the *Stat*. already accepts the reality that (3) applies to forms. One point of the *Soph*. is to argue that there is no problem in asserting, for example,

(3*FS*) the form of sameness is both same and different because it is the same in relation to itself and different in relation to everything else.

If there is no difficulty in simply accepting (3*FS*) then the attempt to find some way to explicate what both is 'to be' and 'not to be' is moot. But Vlastos certainly does not treat the explication of that as moot. The choice, however, is between appealing to the *Stat*.'s explanation of greater and lesser forms but accepting the question as moot on the basis of the *Soph*.–*Stat*. account of the forms, or treating the question as pertinent but cutting off the possibility of appealing to the *Stat*. In either case, (3*FQ*) does not accomplish what Vlastos thinks it does.

For example, since the Queen of England was bald as a baby, we are allowed to say on the basis of the inference from (*T*) to (*Q*) that the Queen of England is bald. This is just as misleading as saying that the Empire State Building is short because it is shorter than any building taller than it. If (3) should be discarded on these grounds, so should (2), as well as (1) and (4), which have the same inferential structure.

Fortunately, Vlastos's criticism of (3) is mistaken. Vlastos thinks it is obvious that a form of inference that allows one to conclude that *the Empire State Building is short* is obviously wrong. The mistake is Vlastos's further inference, which Plato does not make, from

(*Q*) *x* is *F* and not-*F*

to

(*Q**) *x* is *F*.

Plato never thinks that Simmias is short *tout court*. He only thinks that Simmias is short *and* tall. By this he means that Simmias is short compared to Phaedo but tall compared to Socrates. *Per* Vlastos, it is indeed be misleading to say that the Empire State Building is short, but Plato is not guilty of affirming a form of inference that leads to such a conclusion. In fact, such a conclusion runs contrary to what Plato is constantly at pains to defend, namely, only the form of *F* itself is *F* without qualification. Plato would not say that the Empire State Building is short *tout court*; only the short itself is short in that sense.

Hence, we can conclude that Vlastos's criticisms do not defeat the possibility of explaining how sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F* in terms of relativity: Since *a* is a sense-perceptible object that stands in various relations to various things, there is no logical connection between every property it has in relation R_1 and every property it has in relation R_2. Thus, it is possible that *a* is *F* and not-*F* because *a* is *F* in relation to *x* and not-*F* in relation to *y*,

and our hypothesis about why the lovers of sights and sounds accept the claim that sense-perceptible objects are both *F* and not-*F* stands.

Before moving to the next section, we should point out what others have noticed about the predicates that can be filled in for "*F*" in the Argument. Annas, for example, notes that in the Argument "not-*F*" is taken only to be the opposite of *F* and that predicates such as "human" and "ox," which do not admit of opposites, are not in view in the Argument.[24] Annas draws a rather negative conclusion for Plato's views from this point, but on the present interpretation this should be understood to have the following implication: the lovers of sights and sounds cannot make sense of qualities that have opposites. Since these are a nontrivial subset of qualities, the lovers of sights and sounds cannot be said to have knowledge of everything, which was the claim to be defended against (475a–e). Plato later expands (mostly without argument) his correlation between knowledge and forms to cover forms that are not opposites (for example, the form of bed). Plato's method of argument here is in the vein of other realist arguments for universals. In *The Problems of Philosophy*, for example, Russell argues that since we cannot do without referring to universals in our talk of relations, we need not be reticent to admit them in the case of qualities. Plato's version of this is that if the lovers of sights and sounds cannot account for predicates that admit of opposites, they cannot be said to have knowledge of everything.

(3) From "The Many Things" to "Sense-Perceptible Objects"

In the formalization of the respective assumptions (chapter 1, section V.B.1) we claimed that Plato and the lovers of sights and sounds agree that if *X* is a "many," then *X* is a sense-perceptible object. This claim is not uncontroversial, so we should provide some support for it.

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24. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's* Republic, 209–10.

The dispute about how to characterize the objects of belief is over how Plato thinks of those things that are both *F* and not-*F*. Does he think of them as types or tokens?[25] In the *Hippias Major*, Plato offers both kinds of examples. On the one hand, Hippias says that burying one's parents and being buried by one's children is fine.[26] Hippias here gives a description of a type because, as Socrates points out, some instances of burying one's parents are fine, others are shameful. In the case of Achilles, for example, to bury one's parents would be shameful. Plato does not mean that if Achilles were to bury Thetis he would be doing something both shameful and fine. No, he would simply be doing something shameful. On the other hand, Socrates says that a beautiful girl is beautiful compared to some things but ugly compared to the gods.[27] Unlike the example of burying one's parents, the beautiful girl is a particular instance that is *both* beautiful and ugly. As many have noted, these two examples indicate that Plato thinks that both types and tokens can be characterized as both *F* and not-*F*, and on this ground both can be distinguished from forms that are *F* but not not-*F*.[28]

What has not been as well noted is that among Plato's ways of distinguishing the objects of belief from the objects of knowledge—for example, the list he gives in the *Symposium* discussed above—some are better suited to distinguish types, others tokens. Being *F at one time* but not-*F* at another, for example, is better suited to distinguish tokens from forms because types are not temporal objects. Being *F in one place* but not-*F* in another is likewise better suited to

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25. See Irwin, "The Theory of Forms," (155–8) for a concise summary of the issues. See also Rickless, *Plato's Forms in Transition*, 23–4. Since, in Plato's considered opinion, there may not be any types that are not also forms and in the present context we are distinguishing forms from things that are not forms, we should say that in what follows "types" should be read as "proposed types." I.e., instead of taking "repaying one's debts" as a definition or description of a type of just act, we should read it, in the strict sense, as a definition or description of a proposed type of just act because it is not, strictly speaking, a type of just act. There is, after all, according to Plato, only *one* definition of a just act, and that definition corresponds to the form of justice.
26. *Hip. Maj*. 292e–293a.
27. *Hip. Maj*. 287e–289b.
28. Descriptions of tokens as both *F* and not-*F* are in, e.g., *Phdo.* 74b, 102bff. Descriptions of types are in very nearly every counterexample offered in the course of a Socratic elenchus, e.g., *Rep*. 331c–d.

distinguish tokens because types are not spatial objects. And being *F in one respect* and not-*F* in another is more amenable to tokens inasmuch as types are unitary things that do not have respects in which they could differ. Conjunctive descriptions of types might make room for distinguishing types along these lines—for example, "burying one's parents *and* being buried by one's children" could be fine with respect to the first conjunct but shameful with respect to the second—but Plato does not seem friendly to such definitions because they simply raise the question of what it is that burying one's parents and being buried by one's children have in common.

The last two ways listed in the *Symposium*, however, are capable of distinguishing both types of *F* and tokens of *F* from the form of *F*. First, being *F in relation to some things* and not-*F* in relation to others is amenable to both tokens—*x* is small in relation to *y*, but large in relation to *z*—and types—dirt is a part of mud but not a part of water. Secondly, being *F for some people* and not-*F* for others is amenable to both tokens, since tokens do not depend on what people think of them, and types, since some types apply only to certain people. For example, "performing open heart surgery on a patient with heart disease" can be a type of just action if one is a doctor, but not for most other people.

Now, the question for the Argument is whether '*ta polla kala*' (479a3, a5–6, d10) refers to types or tokens of beauty, and the answer is that Plato seems to have in mind particular instances (tokens) of beauty, rather than types. It is true that the lovers of sights and sounds might think that '*ta polla kala*' are both *F* and not-*F* because they are beautiful in one place but ugly in another, and this, as noted two paragraphs above, indicates that tokens are in view here. But one could also capture the sense of being both *F* and not-*F* as being *F* for one person but not-*F* for another, and this, as noted in the previous paragraph, can indicate that either types or

tokens are in view. Since the philosophical considerations are underdetermined, the primary evidence for the claim that '*ta polla kala*' refers to tokens is textual: at 480a2 we are reminded that the lovers of sights and sounds "love and contemplate beautiful sounds, colors, and such things."[29] The lovers of sights and sounds do not run around to the various festivals in order to contemplate types of beautiful colors and sounds; they go to the festivals to contemplate the particular colors and sounds they can see and hear.

(4) The Contradiction

Having shown (1) how Plato moves from "appears to be *F* and not-*F*" to "is *F* and not-*F*," (2) what he means by saying that the many things are both *F* and not-*F*, and (3) that the many things are sense-perceptible objects (tokens), we are now ready to show where the epicenter of Plato's argument against the lovers of sights and sounds lies. To begin, {47} needs to be disambiguated:

{47P} All sense-perceptible objects are sense-perceptible objects.

{47LSS} All the sense-perceptible objects are 'to be' and 'not to be'.

If we recall both the Platonic and the LSS versions of {38},

{38P} If there is a sense-perceptible object, then belief is over it,

{38LSS} If there is something that is both 'what is' and 'not what is', then belief is over it,

then we can see that the Platonic version of the Argument comes out unscathed whereas the LSS version stumbles into invalidity because from {47LSS} and {38LSS} we infer

{48LSS} Belief is over sense-perceptible objects,

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29. This interpretation is strengthened by the failure of "veridical" interpretations (e.g., Fine, Gosling) to accurately represent the Argument.

which is inconsistent with

{7LSS} Knowledge is over sense-perceptible objects,

and

{22LSS} Belief and knowledge are over different things.

Because {7LSS} depends on {LSSA1}, the latter is the real culprit. Rejecting {LSSA1} is not the only *logically possible* conclusion to draw from the contradiction in the LSS version. It is, however, the one most likely to be drawn by Plato in the context of the Argument both because he thinks {LSSA2} and {LSSA3} are true and {LSSA1} is false and because Part Two provides the lovers of sights and sounds with some reason to identify the objects of belief with sense-perceptible objects whereas they lack similar evidence for {LSSA1}.

Rejecting {LSSA1} is also what the lovers of sights and sounds will do, but for a different reason. The choice that the lovers of sights and sounds face at this point in the Argument is to either reject {LSSA1} or give up their interest in sense-perceptible objects. According to Platonic psychology, it is more likely that the lovers of sights and sounds will continue to cling to the festivals and choruses rather than choose the harder path of knowledge because, on Plato's view, those who are enchanted with the sense-perceptible world do not readily give up their commitment to it.

One reason to expect this outcome is to remind ourselves of a point made by Vlastos, namely, that we are dealing here with *lovers*, not simply knowers.[30] As such the lovers of sights and sounds have an irrationally (from Plato's point of view) cultivated desire to pursue

30. See Vlastos, "A Metaphysical Paradox," 12ff. Note that in the last fragment of the Argument, {I} (see the next section), Plato drops the '*epi*' language and talks about what philosophers and nonphilosophers "contemplate," "welcome," and "love."

experiences of sights and sounds. The comparison is of course with philosophers, who have a rational desire to experience the forms.

Moreover, Plato's comment that the lovers of sights and sounds "are not healthy" (476e) is reminiscent of his description of the prisoners in the cave:

> "What do you suppose he'd say if someone were to tell him that before he saw silly nothings, while now, because he is somewhat nearer to what is and turned toward more real beings, he sees more correctly; and, in particular, showing him each of the things that pass by, were to compel the man to answer his questions about what they are? Don't you suppose he'd be at a loss [*aporein*] and believe that what was seen before is truer than what is now shown?"
>
> "Yes," he said, "by far."
>
> "And, if he compelled him to look at the light itself, would his eyes hurt and would he flee, turning away to those things that he is able to make out and hold them to be really clearer than what is being shown?"
>
> "So he would," he said. (515c–e)[31]

We should note that this explanation of why the lovers of sights and sounds choose to give up their claim to know is not subject to the so-called dialectical requirement because it is not presented to the lovers of sights and sound as a *reason* why they ought to give up their claim to knowledge. It is a psychological explanation of why it is reasonable to think, on Platonic grounds, that however the lovers of sights and sounds reason about knowledge, the condition of their souls at the end of the Argument makes it much more likely that they would give up a claim to know than give up their continued experience of sense-perceptible objects.

Thus, even though the Argument ultimately differs from the outcome of a Socratic elenchus, we can explain this difference by providing a reasonable explanation why the lovers of sights and sounds would make the judgment Plato claims the would make in their state of *aporia*.

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31. Note the condition of *aporia* mentioned; it is the condition in which those subject to a successful elenchus find themselves. Stokes refers to the lovers of sights and sounds as "dwellers in what will become Plato's Cave" (Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 289).

B. {48}–{55}: What Knowledge and Belief Are Epi

So, {48} Belief is over all the many things. [38, 47]
So, {49} Knowledge is not over the many things. [22, 48]
{50} Knowledge is over the *F* itself.
{51} If *S* welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of *X* is over, then *S* φs in accordance with the faculty of *X*. [implicit]
{52} The lover of sights and sounds welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of belief is over.
So, {53} The lover of sights and sounds believes. [51, 52]
{54} The philosopher welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of knowledge is over.
So, {55} The philosopher knows. [51, 54]

Call this fragment "{I}." Because the LSS version of the Argument is rendered invalid at {48LSS}, there is no LSS version of {I}. The Platonic version, however, runs as follows:

{48P} Belief is over sense-perceptible objects.

{49P} Knowledge is not over sense-perceptible objects.

{50P} Knowledge is over the forms.

{51P} If *S* welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of *X* is over, then *S* φs in accordance with the faculty of *X*.

{52P} The lover of sights and sounds welcomes, contemplates, and loves sense-perceptible objects.

{53P} The lover of sights and sounds believes.

{54P} The philosopher welcomes, contemplates, and loves the forms.

{55P} The philosopher knows.

Recall the impetus of the Argument arising from Glaucon's Challenge: the Argument is needed to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds that they do not have an intellectual interest in everything. The conclusion of the Argument reaches a much stronger conclusion than what was initially required: the lovers of sights and sounds cannot have knowledge of anything.

The first point to make is that {48P} only follows from {38P} and {47P} on the assumption that there are sense-perceptible objects. Since the induction from {39}–{46}, in both its Platonic and LSS versions, assumes the existence of sense-perceptible objects, this is not problematic.

Secondly, it is important to note that after Plato has persuaded the lovers of sights and sounds to give up their claim to knowledge, he is free to do what he has refrained from doing until this point, namely, openly assert his view about the nature of the objects of knowledge. At 479e6–7 he describes the objects of knowledge as those things that are "always the same with respect to the same things."[32] This is not a complete specification of them, but it is more informative than the purposefully ambiguous '*einai*.'

This leads to, thirdly, the question of whether the Argument is intended to establish the existence of the forms. Many interpreters think so because, though it is not usually stated openly, Plato refers to the forms in {50} and {54}. The thought is that in light of {50} and {54} there must be an inferential step to the effect that "Therefore, the forms exist."[33]

However, neither in {I} nor in any other part of the Argument does Plato argue for {50}, much less the existence of forms. Consider, for example, Fine's reconstruction.[34] According to Fine, Part Two should be reconstructed (in part) as follows (the numbering is Fine's):

(6) Knowledge is possible.

(7) Therefore, there must be non-sensible objects of knowledge.

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32. Note that his earlier specification of the forms (479a1–2) comes in what amounts to an aside in the Argument (478e7–479a5) and is not addressed to the lovers of sights and sounds.
33. The clearest examples of this are Hintikka, "Knowledge and Its Objects in Plato," 9, who says that the Argument is one of Plato's "most explicit proofs for the existence of Forms," and Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 93. See also Allen, "The Argument from Opposites in *Republic* 5," 328: "The argument from opposites [Part Two] is offered to prove that Forms exist."
34. Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 93. Shields (*Classical Philosophy*, 82–3) offers a reconstruction that is similar to Fine's with respect to the inclusion of a premise that *knowledge is possible*.

(8) Therefore, there are forms, that is, non-sensible properties.

When combined with earlier premises, the logic of this fragment of Fine's reconstruction is unobjectionable. The problem is that each of these premises lacks a textual basis. Fine refers readers to "479e7–480a5" (=479e6–480a5 in Slings),[35] but there is nothing there to substantiate her reconstruction. Here is the passage to which she refers:

> "But what about those who contemplate each thing itself, which is always the same with respect to the same things? Will we not say that they know but do not believe?"
>
> "This is also necessary."
>
> "Therefore, we'll also say that these men welcome and love (a) that over which knowledge is, but the others that over which belief is? Or don't we remember that we said they love and contemplate beautiful sounds, colors, and such things, but cannot abide that the beautiful itself is something?"
>
> "We remember."

In order to arrive at (6), Fine assumes that (6) must be part of or assumed by at least one of {49}–{55}.[36] Perhaps Fine assumes that (6) is implied by the existential import of {1} or any of the other premises that include reference to knowledge. If so there is no harm in assuming that.[37] But there is a difference between existential import in a statement "*x* is *F* " and an *inference* to the existence of either *x* or *F*. The former is not inferential, not even immediately. It is simply a matter of the meaning of the proposition in question.[38] Fine's reconstruction, however, includes

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35. Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5–7," 93.
36. For convenience:
    {49} Knowledge is not over the many things.
    {50} Knowledge is over the F itself.
    {51} If *S* welcomes, contemplates, and loves what the faculty of *X* is over, then *S* φs in accordance with the faculty of *X*.
    {52} The lover of sights and sounds welcomes, contemplates, and loves the many things.
    {53} The lover of sights and sounds believes.
    {54} The philosopher welcomes, contemplates, and loves the *F* itself.
    {55} The philosopher knows.
37. But if that were the case we would have not (6) but (6′): There is knowledge.
38. Sedley points out that there is a distinction between the existential import of a proposition and the existential meaning of '*einai*': "that [the] unqualified mode of being [expressed by *is* in definitions] entails the subject's existence is not doubted by Plato, but that entailment is not enough to make the 'be' in question existential in sense" (Sedley, "Philosophy, the Forms, and the Art of Ruling," 258). His point is that the existential import of a predicative statement does not entail that the use of the copula in predication is existential. (Elsewhere Sedley expresses reluctance "to talk about different 'meanings'" of '*einai*' (*The Midwife of Platonism*, 101n19)).

an inference to the existence of something, which is out of place in the Argument, especially when one realizes that when Plato intends that inference to be made, such as in the *Timaeus* (51d–e), he makes it explicitly and does not assume it.

Why, then, does Plato give a specification of the objects of knowledge after he has specified the objects of belief ? As we will see in the next chapter, Plato's mention of the objects of knowledge in {I} is part of his rationalist methodology. The Argument is designed not to turn the lovers of sights and sounds into philosophers but to persuade them that their nominalism and empiricism are dead ends for knowledge.[39] Just as there is no argument at all in the *Republic* for the *existence* of sense-perceptible objects, so there is no argument for the existence of any of the forms.[40] The forms are brought in at the end of the Argument to show that only on the hypothesis that they exist is knowledge possible.

III. Conclusion

At the end of the Argument, the lovers of sights and sounds are shown to be *poseurs*. They might lay claim to the title "philosopher," but they are not qualified to assume it because they lack an interest in knowledge of the forms. The goal of Part Two is to persuade the lovers of sights and sounds that they are mistaken about what the objects of knowledge and belief are. The lovers of sights and sounds are shown that because sense-perceptible objects are always both *F* and not-*F*, they are not the objects of knowledge. The main line of evidence for thinking that the lovers of sights and sounds agree that sense-perceptible objects are always both *F* and not-*F* is

39. The general strategy of the Argument has a legacy lasting to the present day. Antiempiricists (or nonnaturalists) often argue against empiricism (naturalism) on the grounds that it cannot account for, say, *a priori* knowledge.
40. It is important to note that Plato nowhere argues for the existence of the forms in the *Rep*. He merely sketches some details of what such an argument might look like; see *Rep*. 533a.

that they assume that, at least in some important cases, knowing *F* entails knowing *F from a certain point of view*.

In closing this part of the dissertation, let us observe that the Argument marks a shift in Plato's argumentative strategy of the *Republic*. To see the shift, we have to note that the lovers of sights and sounds are the last group to be distinguished from the true philosophers. Other kinds of people have been distinguished from philosophers by failing to meet previous criteria for philosophic *ability*.[41] Up to book 5, the philosophers are distinguished in terms of their abilities—in learning, in war, and so forth—not in terms of the kind of objects of which they have knowledge. In fact, in the only sustained discussion of knowledge prior to book 5 (438c–e), Socrates fails to specify what knowledge is *epi*. He says no more than the following: "Knowledge itself is knowledge of learning itself, or of whatever it is to which knowledge should be related" (438c7–9). Philosophers are also distinguished by the kind of education they will have, but the relevant parts of the content of their education is not given. The criteria of ability and education sufficiently distinguish the philosopher from others if the goal is to discover justice, which it is up to the beginning of book 5. At the close of book 4, Socrates says that they have reached their goal perfectly (443b7).

Prior to book 5, it is assumed on all sides that possessing the virtues is sufficient for being good, either for a city or an individual. On this assumption, there is no need to say any more in order to say that the city that has been founded is *good*. And Socrates says as much in the opening line of book 5: "Good, then, and right, is what I call such a city and regime and such a man" (449a1–2).[42] But once the question is opened about whether the city is good (or best), then

41. Cf., e.g., 411c–e.
42. Cf. *Rep*. 462a: "'Isn't the first step toward agreement for us to ask ourselves what we can say is the greatest good in the organization of a city—that good aiming at which the legislator must set down the laws—and what the

one needs to give an account of what goodness is and what it means for a city or person to be good. This requires an introduction to the form of the good, which is the true object of knowledge. So it should come as no surprise that the Argument marks a new approach to distinguishing the philosophers.

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greatest evil; and then to consider whether what we have just described harmonizes with the track of the good for us and not with that of the evil?' 'By all means,' he said."

PART 2

THE PLACE OF THE ARGUMENT IN PLATO'S THOUGHT

CHAPTER 4

ARGUMENT AND PERSUASION IN THE *REPUBLIC*

I. Introduction

Just as in chapter 2 we used the Argument as a starting point to discuss Plato's accounts of knowledge and belief, so in this chapter we will use the Argument as a focal point for our analysis of how Plato proposes to solve the problem of *persuading* others that his accounts of justice, goodness, and the rest are correct. The main claim pursued through this chapter is that Plato grounds his account of persuasion in his account of the tripartite soul and uses his analyses of the various conditions of peoples' souls to guide his decisions about what forms of persuasion to use. In the last section of this chapter, we focus on explaining the place of the Argument in the persuasive project of the *Republic*. First, however, in section II we detail the set of problems Plato faces in attempting to persuading people of his views. In section III we discuss Plato's account of persuasion. In section IV, we show how Plato's account of the soul in the *Republic* provides important theoretical support for his proposed solution.

II. The Problem for Platonic Philosophers

In the *Republic*, perhaps more than any other Platonic dialogue, Plato does not seem to rest content with stating the truth as he sees it. He is also concerned with persuading others of the truth of what he knows. His concern to persuade, however, runs up against a central feature of his metaphysics emphasized in the Argument: the objects of everyday experience are not the objects of knowledge. Plato knows that he can persuade people that this claim is true only if they give him a fair hearing, and the *Republic* contains evidence of a further concern that his ideas will be rejected before people grant him even that. The beginning of the *Republic* dramatizes this nicely.

> "Well, then," [Polemarchus] said, "either prove stronger than these men or stay here."
>
> "Isn't there still one other possibility . . . ," I said, "our persuading you that you must let us go?"
>
> "Are you able to persuade," he said, "if we don't listen."
>
> "There's no way," said Glaucon.
>
> "Well, then, think it over, bearing in mind we won't listen." (327c9–14)

Here Socrates encounters Polemarchus, who is set on forcing him to do something he would rather not, a problem exacerbated by Polemarchus's unwillingness to listen to what Socrates might say in reply. Socrates's reply foreshadows a solution developed in the *Republic*: a philosopher might be able to persuade those who are not philosophers to agree with him.

The question posed by this episode is not so much Is Platonism true? but How can Plato persuade people who will not even listen to his arguments? It illustrates less a problem *of philosophy* than a problem *for philosophers*, and in a book as carefully written as the *Republic* it cannot be an accident that the question is posed at the beginning of the book.

A. The Problem for Plato as a Rationalist Philosopher

In chapter 1 (section V.D), we referred to Plato's philosophical method as "rationalist." In the sense of "rationalist" intended, a rationalist is one who holds that knowledge is acquired, maintained, and developed by the intellect or mind, as opposed to the senses. The objects of knowledge are unchanging, eternal, perfect, complete, simple, non-sensible entities, as opposed to sense-perceptible objects or even sense-data.

Plato faces a central difficulty caused in large part by his claim that the objects of knowledge are not the objects of everyday experience (dogs, tables, and so on) but the forms of such things. According to the *Republic*, the forms are one over many (596a6–7), themselves by themselves (476b10, 479a1, 479e1, 480a11)—hence, separate from and nonidentical with

sensibles—changeless (485b2–3, 479a2–3, 585c2–7), and non-sensible (524c3–14, 526a8–b3, 527d5–e3, 529c6–d5, 537d5–7).

Because most people inherently trust the deliverances of their senses, the last characteristic presents the largest obstacle. One might, for example, accept that the objects of everyday experience are less fundamental than the atoms that compose them before one might countenance Plato's claim that the objects of everyday experience are less fundamental than the forms. Atoms, in virtue of their material nature, seem to remain accessible to the senses, but the forms always elude the grasp of the senses. Forms are not merely unseen, but invisible. Our reliance on sense perception is a significant obstacle to accepting Plato's accounts of justice, goodness, and so forth, or at least moving closer to accepting those accounts.[1] Since some will hold views contrary to Plato's, he needs to undermine belief in contrary views as well as provide positive reasons to accept the Platonic accounts.

What makes accomplishing this goal particularly difficult is that the preference for sensible things over non-sensible forms is not one at which most people arrive through philosophical reflection. Arguing with Locke is one thing; dealing with the incredulous stares of a roomful of Introduction to Philosophy students is quite another. Whatever its defects, Locke's empiricism is the product of philosophical reflection; kneejerk skepticism of Platonism is not. So not only does Plato need to persuade people that his counterintuitive, substantive philosophical

1. There are, of course, the questions concerning justice, which are pursued through the *Republic*, but although these may be the questions driving the narrative, their answers depend on the account of the form of the good offered in the middle books. Plato's statement, for example, in the first line of book 5 that the just city and person described in books 2–4 is "good and right" (*agathên . . . kai orthên*, 449a1–2), he needs an account of goodness in order to adequately defend that description. Commentators (e.g., Yunis, "The Protreptic Rhetoric of the *Republic*") who emphasize the need for Plato to persuade readers that his account of justice is true frequently overlook this point and thereby make Plato's task seem less difficult than it is.

positions are correct, but also he needs to persuade at least some people who are not naturally respecters of philosophical reflection.[2]

B. The Problem for Plato as Author of the Republic

Although we are discussing the problem for rationalist philosophers in general terms, there is also a more specific concern, namely, how can Plato convince *readers* of the *Republic* to accept his view of things? In the first three chapters, we referred to the interlocutors of the dialogue as those whom Plato attempts to persuade. However, the readers of the *Republic* are the real object of his persuasion, and our previous references to Plato's interlocutors should be understood in that light. The interlocutors are useful as a means by which Plato attempts to persuade his readers of what his views are. In putting objections, arguments, and other kinds of speeches into the mouths of the interlocutors, Plato uses the interlocutors to represent objections and arguments that readers might have.

Of course, Plato holds the unobjectionable thesis that readers tend to identify with characters, and the broad range of characters in the *Republic* makes it possible for a broad range of readers to identify with some of the characters.[3] Inasmuch as a character with whom a reader identifies says or does something, Plato assumes that the reader will think and respond in roughly the same way.

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2. In drawing a sharp distinction between readers and interlocutors, Benitez seems to be too sanguine about the level of disagreement Plato faces from his readers. He states that "many, perhaps most, readers do not need to be converted to Plato's side—they may not already share his views, but they do not start out positively opposed to them" ("*Republic* 476d6–e2," 521). This is a false dichotomy. Many readers may neither already share Plato's views nor be positively opposed to them, but they may reject them without due consideration when they hear what they are.

3. Cf., e.g., *Rep*. 396c–e. In this passage, Plato also argues for the stronger point that *A*'s imitation of *B* is a vehicle by which *A* takes on the characteristics of *B*. This stronger point is not part of what I am arguing. All that needs to be taken from 396c–e for present purposes is that "the sensible man" will choose to identify himself with the sensible men portrayed in poetry.

For example, some readers will, like Thrasymachus, be initially opposed to Plato but nonetheless submit to Socratic elenchus—at least as much as it can be replicated through reading. They will, however, refuse to continue to participate in it sincerely when they see the inescapable challenges it poses to their beliefs. But if they are sufficiently like Thrasymachus they will not entirely reject the Platonic inquiry represented by the *Republic*. They will instead maintain an interest in it and listen to arguments cast in Platonic terminology for Plato's position.

Other readers will, like Glaucon, be initially sympathetic to Socrates's views but not be convinced by any of the arguments they have heard in support of them. They will at times agree with what Socrates says—out of either friendliness to him or reasoned argument—and at other times be ignorant of crucial points that Socrates takes to be true. For example, in showing Glaucon that the lovers of sights and sounds cannot be correct, Socrates begins the brief Argument from Opposites (475e–476a) by saying to him that "It's not at all easy for another person . . . but you, I suppose, will agree with me about this" (475e6–7).[4] But on two other points crucial to the argument of the *Republic*—the immortality of the soul and the form of the good—Glaucon is, at least initially, completely in the dark.[5]

In a very important sense, however, both Thrasymachus and Glaucon are distinct from the lover of sights and sounds, "the good man" (479a1) who can in no way endure (*oudamê(i) anechomenos*, 479a3–4) listening to someone who asserts that the beautiful is one, the just is one, and so forth. Such a person has not arrived at his anti-Platonism through philosophical reflection, nor will he even give Platonism a fair hearing on its own terms. Thus, Plato's goal with respect to this kind of person must be different than his goal in arguing with those

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4. See also *Rep*. 507a–b, 596a.
5. See Glaucon's remarks that "you are speaking of an inconceivable [*amêchanon*] beauty" [509a6], i.e., the form of the good, and "you are speaking of an inconceivable [*amêchanon*] greatness" [608c4], i.e., the greatest reward of virtue, which leads directly into the argument for the immortality of the soul.

sympathetic to either Thrasymachus or Glaucon. In the case of the two named interlocutors, Plato thinks that his ideas can at least be articulated openly. In the case of the unnamed lovers of sights and sounds, he is not as sanguine. The most realistic goal for such people is not to persuade them that his view is correct but to persuade them that they lack sufficient reasons to believe what they do. Accomplishing the latter goal must also be done without explicitly mentioning the forms. This presents a radical challenge to Plato, for even Thrasymachus, who stipulates at one point that Socrates must not define justice in terms of what is needful, profitable, or so forth (336c6–d4), ultimately relents from this stipulation and allows Socrates to express whatever his views might be in whatever language he finds best.

There are, then, at least three types of readers at which the *Republic* is aimed, which we might name the Glauconian, the Thrasymachean, and the philodoxian (from 480a6, 11). Glaucon obviously receives more attention than Thrasymachus, who receives more attention than the lovers of sights and sounds, but each of them must be addressed in a unique manner if they are to be persuaded by Plato.

We may summarize the problem for philosophers illustrated in the *Republic* in terms of these three types: Glauconian readers must be persuaded by positive reasons for thinking that the argument of the *Republic* is true. Thrasymachean readers must be persuaded that their views, about justice in particular, are incorrect, and the manner in which they are persuaded must leave them open to hearing what Plato's views are. Like Thrasymachus, the philodoxian readers must first be persuaded that their views are incorrect, but they must be persuaded by argument without using terminology that unambiguously expresses concepts they find impossible to accept.[6]

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6. Of course, it would be a stretch to suppose that Plato thinks all three goals can be accomplished in one reading of the *Rep*. It is more likely that Plato expected readers to read, re-read, and discuss. On this point, see Cavallo and

III. The Persuasive Solution: One Part Argument, One Part Myth

As the title of this section indicates, Plato uses a mix of things in order to persuade these three kinds of readers. In the sections below we will first explain the goals and starting points of persuasion and then explain in detail what Plato's account of persuasion is.

A. The Goals and the Starting Point of Persuasion

If we set aside the political issues raised in the *Republic* concerning the education of philosophers, what remains is a theoretical goal—knowledge of the forms, especially the form of the good[7]—and a personal, practical goal—organizing one's life, in particular one's internal psychology, by the light that knowledge provides.[8]

No one starts with adequate knowledge of the forms, so obtaining knowledge of them requires an initial commitment to their existence despite an ignorance of their exact nature[9] and a

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Chartier, "Introduction," in *A History of Reading in the West*, 6–7: "Writing (in particular, writing a book) had the . . . function of preserving a text. Ancient Greeks were acutely aware that writing had been 'invented' to give texts a fixed form . . . . The late fifth century BC seems to offer a threshold between a time when the book was almost totally dedicated to fixing and preserving a text and a time when the book was designed to be read. Scenes on Attic vases of the period document the shift from scenes of books being used as school texts . . . to scenes of genuine reading that first present male readers alone but soon show female readers as well. These are not isolated figures; rather, they appear in contexts of entertainment and conversation, a sign that the practice of reading was understood above all as an opportunity for social gatherings." (See also Burns, "Athenian Literacy in the Fifth Century BC"; and Nails, *Agora, Academy, and the Conduct of Philosophy*.) Furthermore, in presenting positive reasons for Glauconian readers, Plato does not need to make them accessible for a first-time reader. Inasmuch as Glauconian readers live up to their namesake, they will assume that "it's not only now that these things must be heard, but they must all be returned to many times in the future" (532d; cf. 450b). Glaucon (and Glauconian readers) anticipates further discussion and does not need to be persuaded that it is necessary. The same cannot be said for Thrasymachean and philodoxian readers, but perhaps persuading these readers that they are wrong can be done in less time than showing Glauconian readers why Plato is right.

7. See chapter 2, section II.A.3, for a discussion of what is required for knowledge.

8. The end of book 9 (592a–b) suggests that setting aside the political concerns is not entirely apart from Plato's purpose in the *Rep*.: "'Then . . . he won't be willing to mind the political things.' 'Yes, by the dog,' I said, 'he will in his own city, very much so. However, perhaps he won't in his fatherland unless some divine chance coincidentally comes to pass.'. . . . 'For he would mind the things of this city alone, and of no other.'"

9. Cf. *Rep*. 533a: "'You will no longer be able to follow, my dear Glaucon,' I said, 'although there wouldn't be any lack of eagerness on my part. But you would no longer be seeing an image of what we are saying, but rather the truth itself, at least as it looks to me. *Whether it is really so or not can no longer be properly insisted on. But that there is some such thing to see must be insisted on.* Isn't it so?' 'Of course'" (emphasis added).

specific method of philosophical education that leads one to rely on the intellect, not the senses.[10] Most students will assume that the sense-perceptible world is real and that the deliverances of the senses are an important source of knowledge. Since any good attempt at persuasion must begin with that with which the audience is most familiar, these empiricist assumptions form the starting point of Platonic persuasion. Even if the philosophical education described in *Republic* 7 does not represent the details of Plato's method, it represents at least its spirit, namely, that students must be led away from the visible world toward the intelligible one.[11]

Though Plato is at odds with his most famous student on a number of points, Aristotle's statements about proceeding from what is better known to us to what is better known by nature succinctly express this kind of progression. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle says what he presumably learned from his teacher:

> learning proceeds for all in this way—through that which is less intelligible by nature to that which is more intelligible; and just as in conduct our work is to start from what is good for each and make what is good in itself good for each, so it is our work to start from what is more intelligible to oneself and make what is intelligible by nature intelligible to oneself. Now what is intelligible and primary for particular sets of people is often intelligible to a very small extent, and has little or nothing of reality. But yet one must start from that which is barely intelligible but intelligible to oneself, and try to understand what is intelligible in itself, passing, as has been said, by way of those very things which one understands."[12]

As it stands, the principle expressed in this passage is independent of any account of what the genuine objects of knowledge are. One could imagine Locke, for example, agreeing with what Aristotle says about the distinction between what we start off thinking of as most intelligible and

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10. See, e.g., *Rep*. 524d–525a, and Plato's statement that almost everyone will have a hard time being persuaded by his arguments about what constitutes the best city and person because, first, almost no one has ever seen anything that "matches the present speech" and, secondly, because "they have [not] given an adequate hearing to fair and free speeches of the sort that strain every nerve in quest of the truth for the sake of knowing . . ." (498b–499a).
11. See *Rep*. 532b–d, 533c–534a.
12. *Meta*. 1029b2–12. See also *Phys*. 184a16–20: "The natural way of doing this is to start from the things which are more knowable and clear to us and proceed toward those which are clearer and more knowable by nature; for the same things are not knowable relatively to us and knowable without qualification. So we must follow this method and advance from what is more obscure by nature, but clearer to us, towards what is more clear and more knowable by nature."

what we end up thinking of as most intelligible. But elsewhere Aristotle says something Locke could not agree with, namely, that "I call prior and more familiar in relation to us what is nearer to perception, prior and more familiar *simpliciter* what is further away."[13] Here he, like Plato, identifies the objects of perception as the less intelligible things.

Although knowledge of the truth is the ultimate goal of Platonic persuasion, a crucial intermediate goal is gentleness. Plato remarks that the one who has been persuaded is gentle (354a, 376a–b, 440d). As we will see below, gentleness is caused by a weakening of the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul relative to the rational part. The appetitive part of the soul is described as savage, lawless, and terrible (572b), and the spirited part of the soul is the source of anger (440a–d). Persuading people of what is true brings about a corresponding gentleness in their souls.

B. The Genus and Species of Persuasion

According to the *Republic*, persuasion is a species falling under the genus, "things that turn the soul."[14] At *Republic* 518d–519b, Plato introduces the distinction between a kind of education that recognizes the need to merely turn the soul toward what is real in order to develop knowledge of it, and a form of education that pays no attention to the direction a student's soul is turned—that is, to what a student considers most worthy of his interest—and attempts to put knowledge directly into the soul. Plato defends the former and thus provides a standard for education: good education turns the soul from the sensible world to the intelligible one; bad education does anything but this.

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13. *Post. Anal*. 71b33–a5.
14. The primary reasons for not venturing outside the *Republic* on this topic are that (1) there is not enough space to adequately cover the other dialogues (esp. *Gorg*. and *Phdrs*.), which in any case have been well worked over, and (2) almost no attention has been given to the account of persuasion presented in the *Rep*. Since the question of whether Plato thinks there is an art (*technê*) of persuasion does not come up in the *Rep*., we will not address it.

Plato makes it clear in the *Republic* that persuasion is not the only way of turning the soul. At 413b1 he outlines three ways people are unwillingly deprived of true opinion.[15] The first he calls "robbery" (*klapentes*). He classifies this as either persuasion, which removes someone's true opinion through speech, or forgetfulness, which removes true opinion over time.[16] The second way is through force (*biasthentes*), which removes true opinion through grief or pain. The third way he calls "bewitchment" (*goêteuthentes*), which removes true opinion by charming someone with pleasure or fear.[17]

On the basis of this passage, we can say that persuasion is that which turns the soul through *speech*, as opposed to that which turns the soul through *action*.[18] The latter species can be divided into the subspecies of forceful actions and bewitching actions. Each of these can be further divided: forceful actions are those that work through either grief or pain; bewitching actions are those that work through either pleasure or fear.

Just as that which turns the soul through action admits of multiple division, so to does persuasion. In the *Republic*, Plato refers to a number of different kinds of speech, two of which, argument (*logos*) and myth (*mythos*), are prominent. Because in Plato's dialogues, these are often

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15. Although Plato focuses on removing true opinion, there is nothing to suggest that the question of truth or falsehood is relevant to the classification he gives.
16. For present purposes, we can omit forgetfulness, since it is not brought about by another but by one's own condition. And, in what follows, we will limit our discussion of the kinds of persuasion to those in which one person is attempting to persuade another. That is, we will set aside cases where someone has an experience of pleasure, pain, etc. that is not brought about by another person. Hence, when we distinguish (below) between persuasion by speech and action, we should consider persuasive actions and speeches to have personal causes, not impersonal ones (e.g., acts of nature, or coincidence). Limiting our focus in this way does not do justice to the scope of Plato's concerns in 413b, but an account of "persuasion" by impersonal causes would be too lengthy.
17. From 538d1–3, it is clear that Plato thinks that pleasures do not persuade men who are *metriôn*. The democratic man, however, is persuaded by boasting speeches that *metriotêta* and orderly expenditure are rustic and illiberal (560d5). At 501c, Plato says that if those who criticize his proposal are moderate, they will be persuaded by his arguments, even though it seems outlandish to hand over the cities to the philosophers.
18. As one would expect from a work that represents a lengthy conversation, the characters are not always consistent in their use of language concerning persuasion; e.g., at 458d Socrates says that "erotic necessities" are good at "persuading" people, and at 554d he says that desires must be persuaded by necessity and fear. In these and like cases we should read persuasion not as the species but as the genus.

contrasted with each other,[19] it makes sense to divide persuasion into that which turns the soul through argument and that which turns the soul through myth. In what follows, "myth" will also be used to refer to the various images (*eikones*) and similes (*homoiotêtes*) in the *Republic* because *mythoi*, *eikônes*, and *homoiotêtes* all stand in contrast to *logoi*.[20]

The first form of persuasion, by myth, is employed throughout the founding of the best city. Plato states, for example, that if we are going to persuade people that it is not right to be angry with another person, we will have to tell them the right kind of stories (*muthologêteon*, 378c4) from their childhood. Myths, in the form of images and similes, are also used in the passages on the sun, line, and cave. The most famous reference to persuasion by myth in the *Republic* is expressed in Socrates's statement that the myth of Er "could save us, if we were persuaded by it" (621b8–c1).

The other form of persuasion is by argument, which Plato characterizes as "the instrument of the philosopher" (582d13). Persuasion by argument often takes place through questioning, as, for example, at 589c6–7, where Plato says, "let's persuade [the one who praises injustice] gently—for he isn't willingly mistaken—by questioning him . . . ." Persuasion through argument conducted by questioning is also evident in the exchange between Socrates and Thrasymachus. Socrates says that it is possible to persuade Thrasymachus "that what he says

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19. E.g., *Tim*., but cf. *Gorg*. 523a1–2.
20. In the *Rep*., Plato distinguishes between the content, form, and musical qualities of a *mythos*. The first is simply what a *mythos* is about, e.g., a story about Zeus, Achilles, etc. The second is perhaps closest to the nature of *mythos*, i.e., a *mythos* is a story or tale, as compared to an argument. The last aspect of a *mythos* is its rhythm and harmony. These are brought out primarily in the reading of a *mythos* aloud, and, of course, they are primarily present in *poetic* myth, i.e., not in the Platonic images or similes scattered throughout the *Rep*. In what follows, when we speak of "myth," we must keep in mind that there is more to a myth than simply being a story. From Plato's point of view, the musical qualities of a myth are just as important as the other aspects.

isn't true" (348a4–5) simply by "coming to agreement with one another" (348b2–3), which is achieved through questions and answers.[21]

Although the two subspecies of persuasion are distinct, they are not incompatible. In fact, Plato employs them together in important places in the *Republic*. A prominent example is his creation of the image of the soul as something composed of a human being, a lion, and a many-colored, many-headed beast (588b6–e3). Plato's purpose in creating this image is to "discuss" (*dialegô*, 588b6) the superiority of justice over injustice with the person who disagrees.[22] Having established by argument that justice is better than injustice in benefit, good reputation, and pleasure—729 times more in pleasure!—Plato uses the very complex image of the soul so that the man who disagrees "will see just what he has been saying" (588b10–11). The image is used to show the defender of injustice exactly what he is saying, namely, "that he's affirming *nothing other* than that it is profitable for him to feast and make strong the manifold beast and lion . . . while starving the human being and making him weak" (588e5–589a1).[23] The image and the argument express the same thing, but one is more illuminating to Socrates's Thrasymachean opponent.[24]

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21. It is notable that persuasion through argument does not necessarily require a valid or sound argument. In the case of Thrasymachus and Socrates, it is sufficient to persuade if Socrates can get Thrasymachus to *agree* with him. Agreement between people, then, though not a sufficient condition for *knowledge*, is a sufficient condition for *persuasion*. (As noted in chapter 1, knowledge requires, *inter alia*, agreement with 'what is' (cf. *Rep*. 534c).) The obvious consequence of this is that one might be persuaded of something one does not know. What's more, one might be persuaded of something false.

22. "'Now then,' I said, 'let's discuss with him, since we have agreed about the respective powers of doing injustice and doing just things.' 'How?' he said [*Pôs; ephê*]. 'By molding an image of the soul in speech so that the man who says these things will see just what he has been saying'" (588b6–11).

23. Cf. *Rep*. 589b: "That is exactly what in turn is meant by the man who praises the just." Another prominent example of myth and argument together is the image of the ship, *Rep*. 487b1–489b2, which ends with Socrates's instruction to "teach the image to that man who wonders at the philosophers' not being honored in the cities, and *try to persuade* him that it would be far more to be wondered at if they were honored."

24. The same thing is at work in Glaucon's presentation of the case in favor of injustice: first argue that injustice is better than injustice, then tell the story of Gyges, by which "we would best perceive" the truth of what the immoralist argument says (359b–c).

IV. Psychology as the Ground of Persuasion

Having explained Plato's account of persuasion in the *Republic*, in this section we will first outline the basic idea of the tripartite soul (section A), then explain how argument and myth affect different parts of the soul (section B). In the next section we will explain how Plato relies on his psychological theory to guide his use of argument and myth in the *Republic*.

A. The Tripartite Soul

The tripartite division of the soul is one of Plato's lasting legacies to Western thought, and the *Republic* is one of its *loci classici*.[25] Though the details of its presentation in the *Republic* are contentious, the general idea is clear enough.[26] A basic account is given in *Republic* 4 and expanded later in book 9.

In book 4, Plato argues that the human soul has distinct rational, spirited, and desiring elements. The reasoning element (*to logistikon*) should rule the soul because it is the only part with both the foresight needed for long-term planning and the insight needed for knowing what is good.[27] The desiring element (*to epithumêtikon*) does not know what is best because it "knows" only what it wants, which is whatever will satisfy it in the moment. Desire causes problems in the soul when it is ascendant, but reason is too weak to maintain order by itself. It

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25. The other primary sources are the *Phdrs*. and *Tim*. For an overview of the differences and tensions in these dialogues, see Miller, "The Platonic Soul," 286–9.
26. Two points in particular are disputable: the characterization of the parts of the soul, and the distinctions between the parts. The first dispute centers on the question of whether each of the parts is in some respects a person. *Rep*. 441c–442d, e.g., uses language that Bobonich (*Plato's Utopia Recast*, 220), e.g., thinks supports the claim that the parts are individual persons. White (*A Companion to Plato's* Republic, 129). Stalley ("Persuasion and the Tripartite Soul in Plato's *Republic*," 65–6), and Anagnostopoulos ("The Divided Soul and the Desire for Good in Plato's *Republic*," 176) disagree; they treat the language that seems to attribute to qualities of persons to the parts of the soul as manners of speaking. The second dispute concerns whether the nonrational parts of the soul are genuine parts of the soul. Most of what Plato says in the *Rep*. suggests that they are, but what he says at 611e–612a suggests otherwise. Bobonich, "*Akrasia* and Agency in Plato's *Laws* and *Republic*," defends the view that the nonrational parts are genuine; Shields, "Simple Souls," defends the contrary view.
27. Cf. *Rep*. 441e.

needs the assistance of the spirited element (*to thumoeides*), which, as the seat of anger and courage, rouses individuals to action. If this element of the soul is properly developed, it aligns itself with reason, and order is maintained.[28] If it is undeveloped, then desire overpowers the other parts and assumes rule in the soul. Disorder ensues.[29]

It is worth pointing out how Plato's concept of desire differs from others', even before we consider what he says about it in book 9. In book 4, Plato characterizes desire (*epithumia*) in a number of ways. *To desire* is either for the soul to long for (*ephiêsthai*) or to embrace (*prosagesthai*) what it wants to own or "to nod assent to itself" (*epineuein . . . hautên*) as if it had been asked a question about what it wants (*boulêtai*) (437c3–5). We typically think of desire in the first sense—perhaps even more as an urge or impulse than a longing—and less so in the other two. Under the influence of Hume, we tend not to think that *actually having* what one wants is desiring, and similarly we tend not to think that *acting as if we were responding affirmatively to a question about what we want* is the same as desiring. Plato does, and we must keep that in mind.

In book 9, Plato complicates his account of the soul by claiming that each part of the soul has a characteristic desire (*epithumia*, 580d7), pleasure (*hêdonê*, 580d6), and kind of rule (*archê*, 580d7). Let us examine each of these three.

First, desire. In the account in book 4, *epithumia* is one element of the soul. In the account in book 9, *epithumia* is now said to be present in each element of the soul: there is a desire of reason, of spirit, and of appetite. In what follows, we will use "appetite" to refer to the

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28. Cf. *Rep*. 442a.
29. If the disorder is reinforced long enough, the soul settles into a more or less unchangeable state (cf. *Rep*. 395c–d). In such cases, persuasion of any sort is more or less futile. Therefore, in what follows, when we speak of persuasion we will limit our discussion to those who are able to be persuaded and leave aside those who are not.

element of the soul opposed to reason and "desire" to refer to the longing, embracing, or assenting that characterizes each element.

The primary objects of appetite's desire are food, drink, and sex. Because these are most satisfied by having money, Plato calls appetite the money-loving part of the soul (581a6), but money is not the ultimate object of appetite's desire. Because Plato characterizes the appetitive part as a disunited and variegated set of desires (554a–555a, 580d–581e), it is not even clear that he thinks of the appetite as having a single goal.

The primary objects of spirit's desire are mastery, victory, and good reputation (581b7–8). Spirit is certainly desirous of mastering others or securing victory over others, but the specific object of mastery or victory is not, strictly speaking, determined by spirit's desire alone. As Plato takes pains to clarify in book 4, "each particular desire itself is only for that particular thing itself of which it naturally is, while the desire for this or that kind depends on additions" (437e7–8). Desire for mastery is simply for mastery; desire for mastery *of others* "depends on additions."

Crucially, this leaves open the possibility that in a just soul, spirit desires to master *itself*. Similarly, the desire for honor—that is, to be honored by others—cannot by itself distinguish between the kinds of things for which one might want to be honored. Glaucon's affirmation that honor accompanies all three kinds of life (582c4–5) implies that in a just soul the spirited part can desire the honor that comes from knowing the truth.[30] Although the form of the good is recognized as worthy of honor by philosophers, it is not recognized as such by people who are

30. Plato says both that "the condition that characterizes the good must receive still greater honor [than knowledge and truth]" (509a), and that "the good isn't being but is still beyond being, exceeding it in dignity and power" (509b). Moreover, the philosophers "will despise the current honors and believe them to be illiberal and worth nothing. Putting what is right and the honors coming from it above all, while taking what is just as the greatest and most necessary, and serving and fostering it, they will provide for their own city" (540d–e; see also 591b).

merely "honor-loving" (581b3).[31] In those who are merely honor-loving, the spirited part, which itself is naturally honor-loving, does not have any experience in "knowing the truth as it is" (581d10). The spirited part of the philosopher, however, accepts the deliverance of the intellect that the good itself is most honorable. Such acceptance is paralleled in the image of the city: in the best city, the auxiliaries accept the right opinion about the laws handed down to them by the rulers.

Unlike the desires of the other two elements, reason has only one primary object of desire variously characterized as "knowing the truth as it is" (581b6–7) or "wisdom" (581c5).[32] As we know from Glaucon's Challenge, the desire for wisdom is not a desire for wisdom of some things but not others but for wisdom about everything (475b4–10).

The second addition to the account of book 4 concerns the distinct pleasure that each part has. Although there is no explicit account in the *Republic* of what exactly pleasure is or how it is produced, Plato seems to think of it as the product of filling up a lack.[33] For example, the desire

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31. Ferrari's sharp distinction between the just person and the philosopher ("The Three-Part Soul," 167, 188–9, 191) is not, I think, substantiated by the *Rep*. Ferrari argues that there is a difference because (1) Glaucon says that Socrates's arguments prior to book 5 were given "in spite of the fact that you had a still finer city and man to tell of" (543d–544a), and (2) there is a difference between the merely "calculative" nature of reason in books 2–4 and its "contemplative" nature in books 5–7. I am not sure whether I actually disagree with Ferrari or whether the dispute is merely verbal, but it seems better to say that the picture of the just person outlined in books 2–4 is accurate but *incomplete*. A just person, after all, is one in which each part of the soul is doing the work proper to it, and if the work of the rational part is to love and contemplate the forms, then that is what a just person does. Inasmuch as the just person described in book 4 fails to love and contemplate the forms, he fails to be just. Another way of putting this is that the philosopher is the truly (completely, perfectly) just person, and the "just" person of book 4 only approximates the philosopher. In this light, I think Glaucon's comments are not decisive because he fails to make these distinctions. White (*A Companion to Plato's* Republic, 228) also takes Plato to be identifying the just person with the philosopher.

32. Cooper ("Plato's Theory of Human Motivation," 673) argues that reason has two primary desires, to know and to rule. He bases this claim on *Rep*. 441e4 ("Isn't it proper for the calculating part to rule . . . ?") and 442c5 ("[a person is] wise because of that little part which ruled in him . . ."). These passages, however, do not substantiate the claim that reason has a *desire* to rule. All they indicate is that in a just soul reason naturally happens to rule. In an unjust soul, either spirit or, more likely, desire rules. Ruling in the soul is not anything other than being the strongest part. If reason (with the help of spirit) is the strongest part, then it rules. Moreover, the philosopher's reluctance to rule would be puzzling if he were following the desires of his rational part.

33. On the language of "filling," see, e.g., "if it is pleasant to become full [*plêrousthai*] of what is by nature suitable, that which is more really full [*plêroumenon*] of things that are more would cause one to enjoy true pleasures more really and truly, while what partakes in things that are less would be less truly and surely full and would partake in a

of the moneymaker is to make money, and he has the experience (*empeiria*, 582b5) of pleasure when he acquires money. Similarly, the pleasure of learning is said to come from the filling up of the lack created by "ignorance and imprudence" (*agnoia de kai aphrosunê*, 585b3).

In these examples, it is experiences that are rated as pleasant, but Plato also seems to think that pleasure is not limited to individual experiences. Different kinds of lives can also be described as more and less pleasant.[34] The question in book 9 concerns not just what is the best individual experience of pleasure—say, perhaps the most intense—but "what is the most pleasant of these lives [*tôn biôn hêdistos*]" (581c10–11). Because the question driving the *Republic* is whether a *life* of injustice is better than a *life* of justice, the title of "most pleasant" must be given to a particular way of life, not just a particular experience.[35] In concluding his argument about the best life, Plato says, "Therefore, of the three pleasures, the most pleasant would belong to that part of the soul with which we learn; and the man among us in whom this part rules has the most pleasant life" (583a1–3).

Lastly, the three parts of the soul are said to correspond to three distinct kinds of rule. When reason rules, "each part may, so far as other things are concerned, mind its own business and be just and, in particular, enjoy its own pleasures, the best pleasures, and, to the greatest

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pleasure less trustworthy and less true" (585d–e). See also 437c: "[the soul] reaches out toward its attainment" (*eporegomenên autou tês geneseôs*). Plato seems to realize—note his comment about the pleasure of smells (584b)—that the pleasures of the senses cannot be explained in terms of filling a lack; they may be explained in the more general terms of "motion" in the soul; cf. "the pleasant and the painful, when they arise in the soul, are both a sort of motion" (583e).

There are two distinctive feature of Plato's account of pleasure that are not relevant at present. The first is that pleasures have objects. For a helpful comparison of the pleasure and desire in terms of their objects, see Santas, "Plato on Pleasure as the Human Good," 319–20. The second is that pleasures can be more and less real or true (586b–c) much like sense-perceptible objects are less real than the forms.

34. Weighing lives according to the overall pleasure they produce seems to be part of a project hinted at in the *Prot*., namely, as Santas says, "[to] be able to place whole life options on the scales, weigh them, and make a rational choice, i.e., choose the life that gives us the greatest net balance of pleasures over pains" ("Plato on Pleasure as the Human Good," 310). However, because it is not clear what Plato thinks the nature and status of the hedonist hypothesis articulated in the *Prot*. (355b5–9) is, it is unclear the extent to which the arguments of the *Rep*. about the ranking of lives according to pleasure is continuous with the hedonist hypothesis of the *Prot*.

35. Cf. *Rep*. 361c–e.

possible extent, the truest pleasures" (586e4–587a2). In the case of reason's rule, reason's addition to the desire of spirit is that the desire be for mastery of those whom one ought to master, namely, oneself and anyone inferior to oneself. Only when the soul is under reason's rule does it do well in all respects. When either spirit or appetite rules, the soul falls short of what is best for it.

Although there are other things one could say about Plato's account of the soul, this outline, together with the previous sections, will suffice for the explanation below of how persuasion works, with one exception: The genus of persuasion, as stated above, is that which turns the soul, which we glossed above as that which changes what a person considers most worthy of interest. To be more precise we should say that turning the soul is a matter of changing the relative strength of the soul's three elements. To turn the soul toward the intelligible world is to develop the intellect's capacity to reason and the spirit's capacity to endure, which makes it possible to keep desire in check.[36] To turn the soul toward the sensible world is to fail to develop the capacity to reason and instead to strengthen the appetitive and spirited elements.[37]

To make this point explicit, let us consider the meaning of Glaucon's question at the opening of book 2: "Socrates, do you want to seem to have *persuaded* us, or truly to persuade us, that it is in every way better to be just than unjust?" (357a4–b2). A first explication of this question is as follows: "Do you want to seem to have *turned our souls*, or truly to have turned our souls, to justice?" And a more thorough explication would be the following: (1) "Do you want to have *ordered our souls*—by strengthening and weakening each part in the right way—so that we accept the right account of justice?" Or (2) "Do you want to have *lessened the disorder*

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36. As Ferrari points out, the rational and spirited elements of the soul share the goal of preserving the soul's health. The difference between them is that the rational element is able to understand *how* to bring this about. (See Ferrari, "The Three-Part Soul," 190.) Ferrari does not make the further point that the similarity between them also points out how they differ from the desiring element, which does not share their goal.
37. Cf. *Rep*. 588e–589a.

in our souls so that we are at least more ready to accept the right account of justice than we were before?" Or (3) "Do you want to have *strengthened the existing order in our souls* so that we accept with even more conviction the right account of justice?"

B. Argument and Myth, Intellect and Spirit

Because there are two species of persuasion, one through argument and another through myth, we should expect each of these to affect the soul in different ways. And they do.

Let us start with what Plato states plainly: argument affects the rational part, and myth affects the spirited part.[38] In book 4, Socrates say, "So, as we were saying, won't a mixture of music and gymnastic make [the parts of the soul] accordant, tightening the one [the intellect] and training it in fair *logoi* and learning, while relaxing the other [spirit] with soothing tales, taming it by harmony and rhythm" (441e7–442a2). The intellect needs to be "tightened" (*epiteinô*) because even the most intelligent people need to be taught to argue well in order to develop their intellectual capacity. By contrast, the spirit needs to be "relaxed" (*aniêmi*) because the instruction for those who are naturally spirited consists of training them to reign in their spiritedness.

Plato also states plainly that myths do not develop the intellect. In surveying candidates for a mode of study appropriate to the form of the good, Glaucon says,

> [music] was the antistrophe to gymnastic . . . . It educated the guardians through habits, transmitting by harmony a certain harmoniousness, not knowledge, and by rhythm a certain rhythmicalness. And connected with it were certain other habits, akin to these, conveyed by *logoi*, whether they were *mythôdeis* or *logoi* of a truer sort. But as for a study directed toward something of the sort you are now seeking, there was nothing of the kind in it. (522a–b)

38. Neither kind of persuasion appears to have any direct affect on the appetitive part of the soul. The appetitive part is controlled by both strengthening the intellect and spirit through persuasion (thus making them stronger than the appetitive part) and weakening the appetitive part through different kinds of actions (e.g., appropriately depriving the appetites of what they want).

Although myths do not give knowledge, they do produce beliefs (*doxai*, 378e1), pleasure (*hêdonê*, 390a5), and pain (330d7–e2). If the beliefs a myth produces are in accordance with knowledge, and the pleasure is appropriate, then the myth is good. Otherwise, it is bad.

Although myth and argument affect different parts of the soul, as noted above (section III.B), the two species of persuasion are compatible. Myth and argument are, in fact, interdependent to the extent that the rational and spirited elements are interdependent. The interdependence of the parts is evident in Plato's statement about the task of education: "the instrument with which each learns—just as an eye is not able to turn toward the light from the dark without the whole body—must be turned around from that which is coming into being *together with the whole soul* until it is able to endure looking at that which is and the brightest part of that which is" (518c5–d1). The key part is italicized: the whole soul must be turned around. It is insufficient to attempt to turn the intellect alone. The spirited and desiring elements must be appropriately strengthened and weakened relative to the rational element.

How do arguments strengthen the intellect? In chapter 2, we argued that one of the conditions for knowledge of *X* is the ability to respond to any proposed defeaters of one's account of what *X* is and how it is distinct from all non-*X*. Knowledge requires that one is able to pass every kind of elenctic testing. Arguments provide a basis for knowledge, and an increase in knowledge marks a development of the rational part of the soul.

By strengthening the rational part of the soul, argument also tends to make the whole person gentle (*praos*).[39] In fact, whenever someone is said to be or have become gentle, Plato almost always attributes this to an *argument*.[40] Arguments are the primary means of making a

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39. See above, section III.A.

40. E.g., Thrasymachus grows gentle through argument (354a), the auxiliaries are made gentle by learning and acquiring knowledge of the difference between enemy and friend (376a–b), *logos* is said to make the spirited part gentle (440d), the lovers of sights and sounds must be soothed and gently persuaded by the Argument (476d–e), a

person gentle because they strengthening the rational part of the soul, thereby (relatively) weakening the appetitive and spirited elements.[41] Of course, simply listening to a single argument will not suffice to keep the nonrational elements under control for a lifetime, but arguments do seem to have at least some measureable short-term effect.

If one asks how the spirited part of the soul is developed through myths, the answer must hang on the nature of the spirited part. The spirited part is essentially and literally without reason. In explaining the example of Odysseus, who "struck his chest and reproached his heart with word," Plato says that "Homer clearly presents that which has calculated [*to analogisamenon*] about better and worse and rebukes that which is irrationally spirited [*tô(i) alogistôs thumoumenô(i)*] as though it were a different part" (441c1–2). '*Alogistôs*' is perhaps more accurately translated as "a-rationally." The spirited part is not irrational or unreasonable in the sense that it has made a mistake in reasoning or failed to reason as it should. It entirely lacks the capacity for reason, which means that arguments have no purchase on it.[42]

Therefore, the spirited part must be instructed by something other than argument. Since myths can promote honorable and praiseworthy things by appealing to the spirited part through the pleasure naturally connected to it, they are one way the spirited part is persuaded. When the spirited part experiences the pleasure naturally connected to it, it pursues whatever will maintain and increase its experience of that pleasure. Of course, myths can deceive by presenting

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young person who is naturally philosophic might, in the best of circumstances, be gently persuaded by arguments to turn to philosophy (494d–e), those who object to the suggestion that philosophers should rule are gentler when we show them by the Argument) who the real philosophers are (501c; cf. *Rep*. 501d–e: "'Will they say the philosophers aren't lovers of 'that which is' and of truth . . . . [o]r that their nature as we described it isn't akin to the best . . . . [o]r . . . that such a nature, when it chances on suitable practices . . . will not be perfectly good and philosophic if any is?' 'Surely not.'"), dialectic gently draws the soul up (533d), and the immoralist is persuaded by gentle questioning (589c).

41. Argument is not the only means for doing this, but it is the one Plato refers to most frequently. The only mention of someone being made gentle by a myth is 442a.

42. This point is reinforced by the parallel between dogs and soldiers (the auxiliaries), that is, people ruled by their spirited elements; see 375a–376c, 416a–c, 440c–d. The serious concern that the auxiliaries might turn on the citizens especially highlights the arational nature of the spirited part of the soul.

shameful and blameworthy things as their opposites, but the mechanism of *pleasure* is the same whether the persuasion is for good or ill. With either good or bad myths, the spirited part simply accepts that what a myth presents as noble, good, and praiseworthy is in fact those things. Because it cannot make reasoned judgments about what is noble, good, and praiseworthy, it cannot reasonably judge that the content of a myth is appropriate or inappropriate. Such judgments are reserved for the intellect.[43]

The spirited part can be "educated" by means of the pleasures native to it, but that is not the only way to develop it. It can also be developed by providing it with *true beliefs*. How is it possible for the spirited part to have true beliefs? It is possible because the *faculty* of belief is in the spirited part of the soul. This claim is not one that Plato makes openly, but there is sufficient evidence in the *Republic* to make it plausible.

Plato is not explicit about the relation between faculties and parts of the soul, but we can start with the fact that faculties are *in* the soul. Plato claims that education is not a matter of putting faculties into souls because the faculty of knowledge is already present in the soul of each person (*tautên tên enousan hekastou dynamin en tê psuchê*; 518c4–5).[44]

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43. Much of Plato's treatment of imitative poetry, which is one kind of myth, in book 10 is given over to explaining that this kind of myth is bad because it noticeably pleases the arational part of the soul and imperceptibly destroys the rational part. (Here the spirited and desiring parts of the soul are treated as one in contradistinction to the intellect.) The distinctive features of poetic myth—meter, rhythm, harmony—are naturally pleasant and appeal not to the "best part of the soul" (603a4–5), the rational part, but the "ordinary" (*phaulos*, 603a7) part of the soul, the arational part. After a person suffers misfortune the rational part of the soul "turn[s] as quickly as possible to curing and setting aright what has fallen and is sick, doing away with lament by medicine" (604c9–d1). Under the same conditions, the ordinary part of the soul "leads to reminiscences of the suffering and to complaints and can't get enough of them . . . [and] is arational, idle, and a friend of cowardice" (604d7–9). The pleasure of dwelling on a wrong that one has suffered is increased by the greed (*aplêstos*, 604d8) of the arational part for memories of suffering. (This is consistent with the description of the spirited part of the soul at 440c–d.) Even worse, imitative poetry causes even the best people to "enjoy" (*chairô*, 605d3) identifying with tragic heroes and comic buffoons. Only a few people, Plato says, are "capable of calculating that the enjoyment of other people's suffering [or buffoonery] has a necessary effect on one's own" (606b5–7). Imitative poetry undermines the rational part of the soul by *pleasing* the arational part. In this case again, the pleasure that the spirited part naturally feels is an important part of how it is persuaded.

44. Cf. Plato's statement that dispositions (*êthê*) are in the soul (402d).

The next questions are whether faculties are in specific parts of the soul and, if so, which are in which parts. In the first place, the faculty of knowledge is in the rational part of the soul. This is evident in Plato's statement that the philosopher "grasps the nature itself of each thing 'which is' [*ho estin*] with the part of the soul fit to grasp a thing of that sort because of its kinship [*sungenei*] with it" (490b4).[45] The first part of this statement reiterates the basic idea that different parts of the soul are fitted to accomplish different ends. The second part advances the claim that a part of the soul is fit to accomplish some end because it has an affinity with the object related to its end.[46] The faculty of knowledge is concerned with 'what is' (477a10, 478a7), which is also the description given of the rational part of the soul in book 10 (611d8–2e). Since the rational part of the soul is fit to grasp 'what is' because of its fitness with 'what is', it must be that the faculty of knowledge gives the rational part its peculiar fitness—the faculty of knowledge is in the rational part of the soul.

The kinship that the rational part of the soul shares with the forms means that the faculty of belief—whose objects are not akin to the rational part of the soul—is not in the rational part of the soul. If it were, then the rational part of the soul would not be any more akin to the forms than other parts of the soul.

In addition to the argument from kinship, there is another argument to be made on the basis of the principle of conflict (or noncontradiction) as it is employed in book 10 (602c–603b). When something appears as *A* and not-*A* our senses are misled. Measuring, calculating, and weighing are helpful in such cases so that we are not ruled (*mê archein*, 602d7) by a thing's appearing a certain way but rather by what has been determined by measuring, calculating, or

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45. *sungenes* = *genos* and *sun*: of the same class, family, race, etc. Cf. *Rep*. 485c ("[nothing is] more akin to wisdom than truth") and *Tim*. 90d.
46. Plato makes this claim elsewhere: *Rep*. 611e–612a, *Phdo*. 79d, *Tim*. 90a–c.

weighing. These three activities are the function (*ergon*, 602e1) of the rational part. Even so, when the rational part measures and reports that either *A* > not-*A*, or *A* < not-*A*, or *A* = not-*A*, it remains the case that often the contrary of, say, *A* > not-*A*, (namely, *A* < not-*A*) *appears* as well. On the basis of the principle agreed to in book 4, it is impossible for the same thing to believe contraries at the same time about the same things. So the part of the soul believing contrary to the measurements—that is, the part that accepts the appearance and rejects the measurements—would not be the same as the part that is in accordance with the measurements.[47] The important point for our purposes is that the rational part of the soul cannot do anything other than reason, and since it cannot do anything other than reason, the capacity of belief cannot be in it. The capacity of belief has to be in another part of the soul, and the best candidate to house the capacity of belief is the spirited part because the appetitive part is nothing more than a loosely connected set of desires.

Thus, returning to the question of how myth develops the spirited part of the soul, we can say that it develops the spirited part by both motivating it through pleasure and providing it with true beliefs, and it is possible for the spirited part to have beliefs because the faculty of belief is in it.[48]

V. Psychology as the Guide of Persuasion

It should now be clear that Plato's decisions to employ arguments and myths at various places in the *Republic* are guided by his judgments about what different kinds of readers will

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47. Bloom translates this sentence as "the part of the soul opining contrary to the measures would not be the same as the part that does so in accordance with the measures." Grube and Reeve adopt a similar wording. But this implies that the calculating part of the soul opines, a point I have been at pains to deny. However, the text also admits of the translation I have given, namely, the rational part simply is in accordance with the measurements, not that it believes in accordance with the measurements.

48. See chapter 2, section II.C.2, on the relation between true belief and the faculty of belief.

need in order to be persuaded. In this section, we apply our conclusions about persuasion and psychology to the problem for philosophers laid out in section II. In particular, we will examine what the psychological condition of each kind of reader is—philodoxian, Thrasymachean, Glauconian—and what kind of persuasion Plato directs toward each kind.

A. Philodoxian Readers

What is the condition of the souls of philodoxian readers? We must not attempt to be too precise, but, speaking generally, we can say that the rational part of a philodoxian reader is insufficiently developed. Moreover, the philodoxian reader is strongly inclined to accept the deliverances of the senses over rational argument, and he is one of those not naturally inclined to philosophical reflection. Thus, on Plato's view, philodoxian readers are ruled by their desires. The relative strength of the spirited element in them is evident in their tendency to be tend to be easily angered.[49]

The method of successful persuasion in this case must attempt to strengthen the rational part of the philodoxian reader. What is more, because myths traffic in pleasure and belief, they are somewhat dangerous from Plato's point of view and should be offered with caution to those whose rational capacities are not developed enough to work with the spirited element to keep the appetitive part in check. This conclusion runs contrary to what one might assume Plato does, namely, that he gives myths to those whose intellects are too weak to follow arguments or because he does not have any arguments to give. Neither assumption is true. Myths are in fact reserved, so the *Republic* illustrates, for those who have at least attained a level of intellectual

49. The Argument begins by Plato's statement that the lovers of sights and sounds "might become harsh" (*chalepainê(i)*, 476d7).

ability beyond that of philodoxian (and Thrasymachean) readers and only after arguments have been offered.

The psychological condition of the philodoxian readers and the volatile nature of myths suggests that the safest way to persuade them is through argument. It is obvious that the length and complexity of the Argument requires a great deal of reasoning to follow it, and this suggests that Plato thinks the intellectual capacities of the lovers of sights and sounds (and their philodoxian counterparts among the readers of the *Republic*) need a great deal of development. Of course, the Argument is not a walk in the park for nonphilodoxian readers, but since the deficiency in philodoxian readers is so great, the remedy must be equally great.

Thus, the Argument is Plato's model of one way a rationalist can persuade philodoxian opponents: he can hide *his view* about the nature of the objects of knowledge from the them. He does this by using terminology that the philodoxian will interpret in a way that leads to a dilemma even as the terminology remains open to a rationalist interpretation that does not lead to a similar dilemma. On the model the Argument provides, the philodoxian's dilemma must be faced after he concludes that he cannot account for knowledge at all. He must choose to either give up his claim to knowledge or admit that sensible objects are not the proper objects of knowledge.[50] The latter option is more appealing if the rationalist can demonstrate the possibility of knowledge, but the former option might be inevitable if the interest in sensibles is ingrained in the soul. In this respect, the Argument has the effect of an elenchus, but it goes beyond the results of elenchus because simultaneous with the refutation of the philodoxian, Plato advances a positive argument showing that knowledge is possible on the hypothesis that forms exist.

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50. Plato suggests (502a) that the lovers of sights and sounds will agree that they are not philosophers "out of shame, if nothing else." The source of the shame is their inability to defend their claim to the title "philosopher."

Because Plato is committed to the Platonic version of the Argument, the Argument marks a *beginning* of an argument for rationalism. It cannot by itself lead the newly persuaded philodoxian to a vision of the truth. In this respect, it can be contrasted with both "Diotima's ladder" from the *Symposium* and the philosophical education Plato describes in *Republic* 7: the Argument is not a gradual ascent from a rudimentary sensory awareness of the empirical world to a mental vision of the purely ideal reality. The Argument is more like a description of the first step the one who returns to the cave must take to set the prisoners free. The chained inhabitants of the cave take the shadows in the cave to be real; the first thing the philosopher must do is persuade them that this is not the case. The Argument is designed not to turn the lovers of sights and sounds into philosophers but to persuade them that their nominalism and empiricism are dead ends for knowledge.[51]

B. Thrasymachean Readers

The transformation of Thrasymachus from hostile critic to compliant auditor is one of the most striking things in the *Republic*. Thrasymachean readers are like philodoxian ones in that they are both easily angered, but this is the only predominant feature they share in common. Unlike philodoxian readers, Thrasymacheans are, like Thrasymachus, motivated by a desire for acquiring a good reputation (*eudokimeô*, 338a5–6) rather than a desire to experience beautiful things. The goal of good reputation suggests that the spirited element is strong but misdirected, and their interest in winning arguments, in addition to distinguishing them from philodoxian readers, reinforces this. Although Thrasymachus is characterized as a wild beast (336b5–6), this

51. We can contrast this interpretation with Shields's, who says (*Classical Philosophy*, 80) that in the Argument, "Plato seeks to convert someone skeptical about the existence of Forms into a full-blown Platonic realist." This, I think, is false, given the considerations adduced above.

does not mean that he is ruled by the appetitive part. As the image of the lion from book 9 indicates, we should think of a wild beast as one who is above all spirited.

Since the Thrasymachean readers have not tamed their spirited elements, their rational parts are relatively weak. Plato must therefore use argument rather than myth to persuade them of their mistaken views. The reasons for this choice are the same as those given in the previous section: myths persuade by producing pleasure and beliefs in the spirited part. Pleasure and beliefs are inherently unstable,[52] which makes them unreliable tools of persuasion for people whose souls are in an unstable condition. On the present view, it is no accident that Socrates does not offer any myths to Thrasymachus in book 1.

C. Glauconian Readers

Unlike his persuasive approach to philodoxian and Thrasymachean readers, Plato uses myths to persuade Glauconian readers. The reason for this is that Glaucon is disposed to be gentle in response to Socrates's arguments, which indicates that the spirited and appetitive elements of his soul do not overwhelm his rational element. As Socrates makes clear at 533a, however, Glaucon's rational element is inadequately developed to grasp arguments concerning the form of the good. Immediately prior to Socrates's judgment about Glaucon's ability, Glaucon says he accepts what Socrates says about the form of the good, and that "It seems to me extremely hard to accept, however, but in another way hard not to accept" (532d).[53] On the one hand, Glaucon has not sufficiently developed his rational capacities sufficiently to be able to accept what Socrates has said, but on the other hand his spirited nature possesses true beliefs about the form of the good from the images that Socrates has given. His spirit is ready, but his

52. See chapter 2, section II.C.2, on instability as the mark of belief.
53. Cp. *Gorg*. 513c.

intellect is weak. It cannot yet provide him an adequate account of the form of the good. Like Glaucon, Glauconian readers are ready to accept what Plato says about justice, goodness, and so forth, but they are, in Plato's judgment, not ready for arguments about them.

VI. Conclusion

In the famous image of the three waves the precede the Argument in book 5, the waves do not threaten the truth of Plato's argument. The waves threaten to overwhelm the ability of the interlocutors (and readers) to accept the argument of the *Republic*. Plato's attempt to persuade his readers is evident in the attention he gives to the three waves. As ancillary to the third and final wave, the Argument is intended to be a part of that persuasive effort. If we might add to Plato's imagery, we might say that Glaucon's Challenge is a rip current following the third wave. The Argument is there to prevent readers from being washed out to sea.

It remains an open question whether Plato is successful in his persuasive attempts. It is obviously an open question in the case of Plato's readers, but there is also no conclusive evidence that the lovers of sights and sounds, Thrasymachus, or even Glaucon are ultimately persuaded by Socrates. There are, of course, suggestive points, but many commentators seem overly optimistic about Glaucon's agreement.[54] When Socrates says that one must look elsewhere to see the true nature of the soul, Glaucon replies, tellingly, "Where?" (611d). Even at the end of the *Republic*, it is not clear that Glaucon has sufficiently grasped what Socrates has said numerous times about the "location" of the true objects of knowledge.

It is to Plato's credit, however, that he does not attempt to force Glaucon to agree. Plato is often blamed for authoritarianism, but his emphasis on persuasion indicates that he wants to

54. See, e.g., Yunis, "The Protreptic Rhetoric of the *Republic*," 23: "Yet after Glaucon admits that many people will react violently to the notion of philosopher kings (473e–474a), it comes as a mild surprise that he and Adeimantus calmly listen to Socrates, follow the argument, and ultimately embrace it with little difficulty."

make room for what is voluntary. One difference between actions that turn the soul and speeches that turn the soul is that the latter permit a voluntary response whereas the former do not.[55] One of the only musical modes allowed in the best city is "one that is not violent [*biaiô(i)*] but voluntary [*hekousia(i)*]" (399b3–4), which Plato says is consistent with persuading and being persuaded (399b4–6) and allows a person to act "moderately and in measure" (*sôphronôs te kai metriôs*, 399b8). The notion that persuasion but not force is consistent with the maintenance and development of virtue is reflected again in Plato's maxim that "no forced [*biaion*] study abides in a soul" (536e2–3). Furthermore, the dissociation between persuasion and force is highlighted by the connections between force, violence, and anger.[56] In contrast with the misologist, who abjures persuasion and enjoys using force, Plato describes those who persuade as soothing and the one who has been persuaded as gentle (354a, 440d, 476d, 501c).[57]

Plato does not think that all force is illegitimate or essentially opposed to persuasion. Indeed, he states that it is *necessary* to use both force and persuasion in order to harmonize both cities and individuals (421b6–c1, 519e1–520a2). One of the musical modes allowed in the best city promotes what is voluntary, but of course the other mode permitted is the one that "would appropriately imitate the sounds and accents of a man who is courageous in warlike deeds and every violent [*biaiô(i)*] work" (399a). But faced with the dichotomy of Polemarchus to either

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55. The distinction between forcing and persuading is evident at many places in the *Rep*. Socrates, speaking in the voice of unjust people, says that "in some things we'll persuade and in others use force" (365d4–6); the misologist does not persuade by speech but uses force (411d7–e1); in order to produce the most happiness for the city, its founders must compel and persuade the rulers (421b6–c1, 519e1–520a2); in the image of the ship of state, the stronger sailors, if they fail at persuasion, kill those who disagree with them and persuade or force the ship owner to let them rule the ship (488c–d); and, lastly, in a city degenerating from aristocracy to oligarchy, the corrupted aristocrats, "pushed on by desire . . . will love to spend other people's money; and they will harvest pleasures stealthily, running away from the law like boys from a father. This is because they weren't educated by persuasion but by force—the result of neglect of the true Muse accompanied by arguments and philosophy while giving more distinguished honor to gymnastic than music" (548b4–c1).
56. Note that the adjective '*biaios*' can mean forcible or violent; s.v., *LSJ*, '*biaios*.'
57. Cf. 378c ("those who are going to guard the city for us must consider it most shameful to be easily angry with one another") and 533c–d ("when the eye of the soul is really buried in a barbaric bog, dialectic *gently* draws it forth and leads it up above").

fight or give in to superior physical force, it is at least noteworthy that Plato worked as hard as he did to make a third possibility a reality.

CHAPTER 5

DEFINITIONS AND *DYNAMEIS* IN PLATO

I. Introduction

In this last chapter we will focus on an issue involving fragment {C}, the part of the Argument about *dynameis*. What has been written by others about Plato's account of *dynamis* in the Argument has been almost entirely focused on either what '*dynamis*' means or whether Plato's way of distinguishing them is legitimate, and those issues have been addressed in the previous chapters. However, there remains an interesting and important issue raised by {C} that has received scant attention. Little, if anything, has been said about how the restrictions Plato sets on distinguishing *dynameis* relate to his attempts in the dialogues prior to the *Republic* to develop adequate definitions of things such as piety, knowledge, courage, beauty, virtue, and rhetoric.

At the center of this chapter is Plato's claim in {C} that the *only* way to distinguish one *dynamis* from another is by stating what the two *dynameis* accomplish and what they are *epi*. We will argue that this restriction is a natural development of the way *technai* are defined in the *Gorgias* but that what Plato proposes in {C} conflicts with the method of collection and division in the *Sophist*.

*II. A Review of Some Criteria for Definitions in the pre-*Republic *Dialogues*

One well-known feature of Plato's philosophy, especially as it is presented in the dialogues prior to the *Republic*, is his insistence on definitions. In particular, there is a clearly defined group of dialogues in which Plato focuses completely on articulating definitions of

things such as piety (in the *Euthyphro*), courage (*Laches*), or beauty (*Hippias Major*).[1] There are also other dialogues, the *Gorgias*, for example, in which giving a definition is an important but not exclusive focus.

This section will focus on two of the proposed definitions of piety in the *Euthyphro* as well as Plato's definition of rhetoric in the *Gorgias*. Our discussion of the first definition from the *Euthyphro* will highlight Plato's insistence that a good definition both state necessary conditions and be used in some way as a pattern or model (*paradeigma*) that can in turn be used to make judgments about the thing being defined. Our second discussion of the *Euthyphro* will focus on Plato's attempt to define piety by what we will call "synthesis." The discussion of the *Gorgias*, the third section below, will focus on Plato's definition of rhetoric by synthesis supplemented with a way of distinguishing *technê* by what they are concerned with and what they produce.

A. Definition, Necessary Conditions, and Paradeigma

In the *Euthyphro*, Plato rejects a number of different attempts to say what piety is. The focus of this section is on his rejection of Euthyphro's first attempt to define piety as prosecuting someone for wrongdoing.[2] Plato gives two reasons for rejecting this definition.

First, he rejects this proposed definition because it is too narrow. If we, like Euthyphro (6d6–7), think there are pious actions other than prosecuting someone for wrongdoing, then the proposed definition will not encompass all the relevant kinds of pious things we think there are.

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1. Robinson (*Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, 2nd ed., 49) distinguishes between dialogues whose primary focus is on questions of the form "What is *X*?" (*Euph*., *Lach*., *Charm*., *Hip*. *Maj*.) and those focused on questions of the form "Is *X Y*?" (e.g., *Gorg*., *Meno*, *Rep*. 1). Of the *Gorg*., which we will discuss below, Robinson says that it "abandon[s] the question 'What is X?" for the question 'Is X Y?" (ibid.). Our focus in the *Gorg*. will, however, be on a section of the dialogue prior to the abandonment of the "What is *X*?" question.
2. *Euph*. 5d–e, 6c–d. References to the *Euph*. are to Duke et al. I continue to use "Plato" and "Socrates" interchangeably as befits the context.

Because the proposed definition states not what piety is but only something "that happens to be pious" (*hoti touto tunchanei hosion on*, 6d3), it does not state a necessary condition of piety. Moreover, Plato is not looking for a list of all the pious things—such a list would, after all, solve the problem of omitting some pious things—but a statement of "that form by itself [*ekeino auto to eidos*] by which all the pious things are pious" (6d10–11).[3] Plato's point is that a good definition needs to state directly what the thing being defined is. This is more than requiring that a definition state the necessary condition(s) of a thing. The requirement that the definition be about, that it "teach" (*didaxai*, 6d10), "*ekeino auto to eidos*" means that the definition must state the "essence" of piety. We should not presume to know everything this entails because there is no further discussion in the *Euthyphro* of *how* to specify *auto to eidos*. In later dialogues, as we will see below, Plato's account of how to do that develops in a way not evident in the *Euthyphro*.

Secondly, Socrates rejects the proposed definition because it does not "teach" what the pious is in a way that enables him to group together everything that is like it in its piety and distinguish it from everything that is not pious. The proposed definition, in Plato's words, enables one to learn neither from nor about the *paradeigma* to which it makes reference (6e6).[4] '*Paradeigma*' has been translated in various ways, but two common, equally good translations are "standard" and "pattern."[5] "Standard" is helpful because it points out that what piety, for example, truly is serves as a benchmark by which we can assess whether any given thing is pious or not. In other words, if we understand what the pious is then we can understand what particular

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3. For present purposes, it is not important to take up the issue of what Plato means to express by the dative translated as "by which." There is some vagueness about the meaning of '*hô(i)*.' Some have taken it in a strong sense to express Plato's notion that the form of *F* is the cause of all the *F* things being *F*. For example, the form of piety causes all the pious things to be pious. The text, however, also admits of a weaker reading: the form of piety is the reason or explanation why all the pious things are categorized as pious things. For a defense of the weaker reading, see Dancy, *Plato's Introduction of Forms*, 134–7.
4. Cf. *Euph*. 12e1–5.
5. E.g., Allen opts for "standard" (*Plato's* Euthyphro *and the Earlier Theory of Forms*, 28), West opts for "pattern" (*Four Texts on Socrates*, rev. ed., 48).

things are included in the class of pious things. "Pattern" is helpful in highlighting the notion that the thing defined is in some way resembled by the particular things that fall under it. Plato emphasizes this point in the *Republic*: the just person will conform as much as possible to the *paradeigma* of justice (472b3–c6); the forms of justice, beauty, and goodness serve as patterns for the guardians to refer to and contemplate in giving laws (484c4–d2); and the craftsman who makes couches looks to the form of the couch to guide him in making a particular couch (596b4–8).

Whatever the precise meaning of '*paradeigma*' is, in the *Euthyphro* Plato thinks that the definition of piety needs to state, in some way, the *idea* of piety, which can in turn be used as a standard and pattern (*Euph*. 6e4), by which, in some way, we can distinguish pious things from impious things.[6] Plato is not clear about the way in which a definition can state what the essence of something is, nor is he clear about how a good definition enables us to distinguish things by means of *paradeigmata*. But he is clear that without a definition that states the *idea* of piety that serves as the *paradeigma* of piety, we will be unable to distinguish between pious and impious things.[7]

The relation between the criterion of stating the necessary conditions and the function of a *paradeigma* is likewise not explained in this passage, nor elsewhere in the *Euthyphro*. But if we think that a *paradeigma* is specified by stating the necessary conditions of *auto to eidos*, then we can infer from the singular nature of the form itself that the *paradeigma* is also definite and singular. This suggestion does not contradict anything Plato says later in the *Euthyphro*, though we must be careful not to push it too far. In particular, for reasons that will become clear in the

6. For an outline of the main points of Plato's paradigmatism, see White, "Plato's Concept of Goodness," 361–3.
7. This point is reiterated elliptically at the close of the dialogue (*Euph*. 15e–16a).

next section, Plato does not think that the *paradeigma* is simple in the sense that it cannot be analyzed.

So from Plato's criticism of Euthyphro's first attempt to say what piety is, we can extract two conditions for a good definition of *F*. The first is that it must state the necessary conditions of what is expressed by the *definiendum*. The second is that it must provide by means of *paradeigmata* the basis for distinguishing between *F* and non-*F*.

B. Definition and Synthesis

Later in the *Euthyphro*, beginning at 11e2, Plato floats another definition of piety: the pious is that part of the just concerned with care of the gods. Although this definition is also rejected, it seems that Plato considers it an improvement on the previous one. He signals this by having Socrates say that "I myself will take an eager part in showing you how you may teach me about the pious" (11e2–3). Hence, the definition on offer is not framed by Euthyphro's concepts but suggested by Plato himself. This holds for both the form and content of the proposed definition but especially, for present purposes, the form.[8]

The distinctive property of the form of this definition is its reference to parts and wholes. Plato's strategy for defining the pious with reference to parts and wholes is suggested by the opening statement that it "seem[s] necessary . . . that all the pious is just" (11e4–5) and the follow-up questions: "And is all the pious just? Or is the pious all just, while the just is not all pious, but part of it is pious, part something else?" (11e7–12a2).[9] These sentences indicate that Plato's attempt to explain what the pious is begins with understanding how it is *synthesized* into

8. The introduction of justice into the discussion of the pious is accomplished earlier by Socrates in discussion with Euthyphro about what the gods disagree about. Socrates and Euthyphro agree that the gods disagree about, *inter alia*, what is just and unjust (*Euph*. 7e1–4).
9. Neither '*meros*' nor '*morion*' is used here, but the former is used six times in *Euph*. 12d–e, the latter twice from *Euph*. 12c–d.

a larger whole or, what is the same, how a larger, as yet unspecified whole is analyzed into parts, of which the pious is one.

The discussion of parts and wholes from 12a–e is primarily in spatial terms. When Socrates explains to Euthyphro that the poet is mistaken in thinking that dread and awe are coextensive, he adopts the poet's usage of '*entha*'—"where there is dread there is awe" (12b1)—and says that "dread extends further than [*epi pleon*] awe" (12c5). The spatial language is made a bit abstract by its application to numbers—"where odd is there too is number" (12c7–8), but Plato still expresses the relation between parts and wholes in spatial terms. In later dialogues, notably the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, the language of parts and wholes is overlaid with the language of species ('*eidos*') and genus ('*genos*'), but even though the synthesis in the *Euthyphro* lacks the explicit hierarchy of species and genus, it is clear that *P* is defined by a two-step process of first stating the whole, *W*, of which *P* is a part and then distinguishing *P* from any other parts (*Q*, *R*, . . .) of *W*.[10]

The way in which synthesis is applied to the pious means that the parts must be distinguished by descriptions of some kind. First, Socrates asks whether "the pious is part [*morion*] of the just" (12d2–3), and Euthyphro agrees that it is. The next question, the one that ultimately goes unanswered because Euthyphro abandons this line of inquiry (14a–c), is "what part [*meros*] of the just the pious would be" (12d6–7). The example Socrates gives to aid in understanding the nature of this question is mathematical: if asked to say what part (*meros*) of number is the even and what this number "happens to be" (*ôn tunchanei*, 12d8–9) one would distinguish the even as that which is *isoskelês* (literally, "equal-legged," 12d10) and odd as that which is *skalênos* (literally, "limping" or "unequal," 12d9). Thus, the mathematical example

10. For this reason I avoid the language of species, genus, and differentiae in this discussion; see sections IV.B and IV.C below.

shows that in order to say what part of *W* is *P*, one needs to give a description of *P* that distinguishes it from *Q*. Hence, for the definition of piety, one needs to say what part of the just the pious is by distinguishing it from the other parts of justice.

There are two ways of doing this, but they are not clearly distinguished in the *Euthyphro*.[11] The first is expressed in Euthyphro's statement that "that part of the just is . . . pious which concerns [*peri*] the care of the gods, while that which concerns [*peri*] the care of human beings is the remaining part [*to loipon . . . meros*] of the just" (12e6–9). Here we find the attempt to distinguish the parts by stating what the different parts are *peri*, what they are "about" or "concerned with." In his reply, Socrates tacitly accepts the basis of this distinction: "Surely you aren't saying that that concerning [*peri*] gods is of the same sort as the cares concerning [*peri*] other things . . ." (13a2–4).

However, instead of pressing the distinction in terms of '*peri*,' Socrates presses Euthyphro on what the care concerning the gods *produces*. In particular, after clarifying that "care of the gods" means "skilled service [*hypêretikê*] to the gods" (13e6–7), Socrates wants Euthyphro to explain what *ergon* (13e1, 13e7) the gods produce with our assistance.[12] Although the examples of *erga* prior to 14a1 all involve a subordinate assisting a skilled superior in producing something—for example, a doctor's assistant helps the doctor produce health—after 14a1 Plato drops talk of "assistance" and simply asks what various kinds of people—generals, farmers, gods—produce.

Taken together, these two notions provide a way to distinguish members of the class of productive things. Generals can be distinguished from farmers because they are concerned with

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11. According to Brown, the obscurity occurs throughout Plato's thought; see "Definition and Division in Plato's *Sophist*," 168.
12. Plato uses the noun '*apergasian*' and the verb '*apergazomai*' throughout *Euph*. 13d–14a.

and produce different things. These methods of distinguishing productive people or things are not developed in the *Euthyphro*, but variations on it feature prominently in the *Republic*. For one, Plato says in {C} that *dynameis* are distinguished in part by what they produce (*apergazomai*, 477d1); for another, in book 1 Plato says that a number of things, of which virtue is one, produce an *ergon*,[13] and he uses the fact that justice, moderation, wisdom, and courage produce different things as a way of distinguishing them from one another. We will return to this point in section III.

Euthyphro proves unable to respond to this line of questioning because he refuses to provide an adequate explanation of what *ergon* the gods produce with our help. He instead tries to give an entirely different account of what piety is (12e1–14c3), but he fails to do this, too. Thus, the definition of the pious as the part of justice that concerns the care of the gods is rejected because it lacks sufficient information about what distinguishes piety from the other part of justice.

As to the nature of the descriptions that distinguish the parts, there are two points that remain obscure in the *Euthyphro*. First, it is not clear whether these are mere descriptions or definitions in a stricter sense, namely, statements of the necessary conditions of *F* that can be used as a *paradeigma* by which we can distinguish *F* things from non-*F* things. Consider again Plato's example of odd and even. The question to be answered is What part of number is the even? Plato's answer is "whatever . . . is isosceles" (*an . . . isoskelês*). Despite the indefiniteness expressed by '*an*,' which seems to run contrary to the definiteness expressed by "*ekeino auto to eidos*" (6d10–11), Plato presents this as an adequate description of the even. But does the answer

13. See *Rep*. 352d–353e. Although the *Euph*. seems to be assume that piety is a virtue, it does not state this explicitly. Elsewhere (*Lach*. 199d, *Meno* 78e, *Prot*. 330b) Plato lists piety with other virtues, but piety is conspicuously absent from the virtues listed in the *Rep*.; see Allen, *Plato's* Euthyphro *and the Earlier Theory of Forms*, 53–4.

"whatever is divisible by two" provide us with a *paradeigma*? It must, for it is difficult to believe that Plato would neglect the *paradeigma* requirement after strenuously insisting on it a few pages prior, and being-divisible-by-two fits the bill of being both the pattern and standard of being even. It was for this reason that in the previous section we distinguished between a *paradeigma*'s being singular, that is, unique, from its being simple, indivisible, unanalyzable. In the mathematical example the even is uniquely distinguished from the odd by its being divisible by two, but because the even's divisibility by two is susceptible to further analysis, the *paradeigma* of the even is not unanalyzable.

The second obscurity concerning the distinctions between the parts of a whole concerns the relation between the *paradeigma* of *F* on the one hand and statements about what *F* is *peri* and the *ergon* of *F* on the other. From the text of the *Euthyphro* it is not clear whether by itself a statement of what *F* is *peri* and what its *ergon* is would satisfy the *paradeigma* requirement. One can infer, however, that at most such a statement would only partially satisfy the *paradeigma* requirement because it would not state the whole of which *F* is a part. Apart from the context of the whole, the meaning of statements concerning the nature of its parts is incomplete.

To summarize, the definition of piety as that part of justice concerned with care of the gods is of the form: The definition (by synthesis) of *P* = (1) *P* is part of a whole, *W*, (2) *P* is distinguished from other parts, *Q*, *R*, . . . , of *W* by reference to (i) what *P*, *Q*, *R*, . . . , are *peri* and (ii) the *ergon* of *P*, and (3) the statements by which *P* is distinguished from *Q*, *R*, . . . (i) state the necessary conditions of *P* and (ii) provide a *paradeigma* by which we can distinguish *P* things from non-*P* things.

It is important to keep in mind that the present definition of piety is not rejected because these conditions are deficient. Euthyphro's definition is rejected because he cannot adequately

explain what the service that humans render to the gods produces. Socrates says that Euthyphro was "at the very point at which, if [he] had answered, I would already have learned piety sufficiently from [him]" (14c1–3), which is often interpreted as an ironic statement. But if the present discussion is correct then the statement need not be ironic because Euthyphro was actually on the verge of giving an adequate (cf. *hikanôs*, 14c2) definition of piety.[14] All he needed to do, which is not to say that it would have been easy for him or anyone else to do, was give an adequate account of the distinction between the parts of justice.[15]

C. Definition and Synthesis Expanded

The *Gorgias*, in the passage containing Plato's definition of rhetoric (462b1–466a3),[16] illustrates in a way consistent with the *Euthyphro* one way in which Plato thinks it is possible to define something. In the *Euthyphro*, Plato's requirements for definition include (*a*) necessary conditions, (*b*) *paradeigma*, and (*c*) the synthesis of parts into wholes. In some definitions—definitions of things that are productive, for example—Plato thinks we also should make reference to (*d*) what the thing being defined is *peri*, and (*e*) its *ergon* in order to specify the part being synthesized. In the *Gorgias*, Plato's account of definition makes no explicit reference to (*a*) and (*b*), but it does make reference to (*c*), (*d*), and (*e*). Additionally, Plato's definition of rhetoric in the *Gorgias* also clarifies the distinction between what a *technê* (or its imitator) is

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14. Note that the other Socratic dialogues of definition lack attempts at synthetic definitions and statements by Socrates to the effect of "you were very close to giving a definition of *X*." This is not conclusive evidence, but it is suggestive.
15. Definition by synthesis also marks an improvement over Euthyphro's attempt to define the pious as "that which is dear to the gods" (*esti . . . to . . . tois theois prosphiles*, 6e11–7a1) because this definition, in Aristotle's terms, fails to specify a genus. As the Philosopher says, "This sort of error is always found where the essence of the object does not stand first in the expression, e.g., the definition of 'body' as '*that which* has three dimensions,' or the definition of 'man,' supposing any one to give it, as '*that which* knows how to count': for it is not stated what it is that has three dimensions, or what it is that knows how to count: whereas the genus is meant to indicate just this, and is submitted first of the terms in the definition" (*Topics*, 142b23–29, trans. Pickard-Cambridge).
16. References to the *Gorg*. are to Dodds's edition.

about (*peri*) and what it produces. This clarification is used to distinguish between the parts of a whole into which the part being defined is synthesized.

Like the early Socratic dialogues, the *Gorgias* opens with an instance of the What is *X*? question: What is rhetoric? And like the early Socratic dialogues this question is carefully distinguished from the question What sort of thing is rhetoric? (448e6–7).

However, despite making this distinction in discussion with Polus, Socrates asks Gorgias to answer the question What is rhetoric? not by giving a direct answer to that question but by answering two other questions: Of what sort of persuasion is rhetoric the art? Of persuasion about what [*peri ti*] is rhetoric the art? (454a8–9). Gorgias's answers to these questions are as follows: Rhetoric is "persuasion in law courts and in other mobs" (454b5–6) and it is "about [*peri*] those things that are just and unjust" (454b7).

As in our discussion of the *Euthyphro*, we should not let Gorgias's (and Polus's) failure to defend these answers distract us from the fact that Plato accepts this *form* of answer. Socrates gives his own answers to the questions, and, moreover, to say that he merely "accepts" Gorgias's replies as the right kind of answers underplays the degree to which Socrates leads Gorgias to these kinds of answers. Socrates is, after all, the one who first pushes Gorgias to say what rhetoric is *about* (449d8–9)[17] and then distinguishes *en passant* the sort of thing persuasion is from what persuasion is about.[18] Plato's approval of this form of answering the What is *X*?

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17. Socrates asks: "about what, of the things that are [*peri ti tôn ontôn*], is it [rhetoric] a science?" (449d8–9). Note that in the *Rep*. Plato uses the same phrase, "*ti tôn ontôn*" (477c1), in stating the kind of thing that a *dynamis* is.
18. From *Gorg*. 451d–452a the following two questions are run together: What is rhetoric about (*peri*)? (451d1; cf. 452a4–5). What is the *ergon* of rhetoric? (452a7–8). Because the *ergon* of rhetoric is said to be persuasion (452e1), the latter question is subsumed in the question, "Of what sort of persuasion is rhetoric the art?" But by 454a–b the questions have become distinct. Note also that Socrates describes the "whole occupation" (*pragmateia . . . hapasa*) and "chief point" (*kephalaion*) (453a2–3) of rhetoric as persuasion, which echoes his statement in the *Euph*. that the "chief point" (*kephalaion*, 14a2; cf. 14a6, 14b9) of farming is food from the earth.

question is also evident in Socrates's examples of how his interlocutor should say what rhetoric is about:

> try to say what rhetoric, which has its decisive effect in speeches, is about. Just as if someone asked me about any one of the arts that we were just now talking about, "Socrates, what is the art of arithmetic?" I should say to him, just as you recently did, that it is one of those that have their decisive effect through speech. And if he asked me further, "What are they about?" I should say it is one of those that are about the even and the odd, however large each happens to be. (*Gorg*. 451a6–b4)

Thus, as in the *Euthyphro*, Plato has a rather definite conception of the form that a good definition should take.

One wrinkle in the *Gorgias* is Plato's admission of a certain kind and degree of ambiguity concerning what *technai* are concerned with. Although the *Euthyphro* does not examine the notion of *technai*, much less raise the issue of what *technai* are about, from its examples of generals and farmers (*Euph*. 14a1–8) one assumes that different *technai* are concerned with distinct kinds of things. But in his explanation of how Gorgias should answer correctly concerning what rhetoric is about, Socrates says:

> And again, if he asked, "What art do you call calculation?" I should say that it too is one of those that accomplish their whole decisive effect by speech. And if he asked further, "What is it about?" I should say, just like those who write up proposals in the people's assembly, that in other respects [*ta . . . alla*] calculation is just like [*kathaper*] arithmetic—for it is about the same thing [*peri to auto*], the even and the odd—but it differs to this extent [*diapherei de tosouton*], that calculation examines how great the odd and the even are in relation to themselves and to one another. (*Gorg*. 451b4–c5)

Here Plato allows that two *technai* can be concerned with the same thing but in different ways. This point is made presumably because when Plato gives his own definition of rhetoric he will need to take advantage of it:

> On the one hand, each of these two share something in common with each other, seeing that they are about the same thing [*peri to auto*], medicine with gymnastic and justice with the legislative art; on the other hand, they nevertheless differ somewhat from each other [*homôs de diapherousin ti allêlôn*]. (*Gorg*. 464c1–3)

Plato never states in the *Gorgias* the differences between medicine and gymnastic nor, for that matter, between justice and the legislative art, though he does state that medicine and justice are

alike in releasing a person from sickness (*Gorg*. 477e7–478b2). Borrowing from Aristotle's account of justice, one could suggest that the first of each pair corrects things that have gone wrong and the second keeps good things in a good condition.[19] Thus, medicine and gymnastic are about the same thing, namely, bodies, but the former is concerned to make them well, the latter to keep them in a healthy condition. Justice and the legislative art are concerned with souls, but the former with a view toward making them healthy and the latter with a view toward keeping them healthy (*Gorg*. 478a1–b2).[20]

After rejecting Gorgias's definition of rhetoric, Socrates defines rhetoric as the part (*morion*, 462e4) of *empeiria* that imitates justice, which is the virtue concerned with the soul that produces genuine health in the soul. In this definition we find synthesis—and a rather elaborate synthesis at that—reference to what the virtue and its imitator are *peri*, and the *erga* of the virtue and its imitator. '*Peri*' and '*ergon*' function in the definition as ways of distinguishing the part that is being defined by means of synthesis into a whole that has other parts. In sum, in the *Gorgias* Plato is satisfied with a definition consisting of the following: (i) the kind of thing rhetoric is (an *empeiria*, 462c3–5; specifically, a "phantom" (*eidôlon*, 463d2) of justice), (ii) the *ergon* of rhetoric (flattery, *kolakeian*, 463b), and (iii) what rhetoric is *peri* (the soul).[21]

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19. Cf. *Soph*. 229a1–2.

20. For a helpful outline of these points, see Dodds, *Plato's* Gorgias, 226–7. One might think that, strictly speaking, medicine and gymnastic are about different things; the former is about sick bodies, the latter about healthy ones. And likewise for justice and the legislative art. However, this does not seem to express what Plato has in mind because in both the example of arithmetic and calculation and the applications to medicine/justice and gymnastic/legislative art Plato states that the relevant arts are "about the same thing" (*peri to auto*).

One might also think that the way in which medicine and gymnastic (and justice and the legislative art) differ is in their *erga*: medicine produces health, but gymnastic maintains health. Although this sounds plausible, the example of the difference between calculation and arithmetic suggests something else. Plato says that the difference between these two is that the latter is about how large the even and the odd are whereas the former is about how large the even and the odd are in relation to themselves and one another. So the difference is neither in their *erga* nor in what they are *peri* but with respect to that with which they are concerned is examined.

21. It is interesting to note a certain flexibility about '*peri*.' In Gorgias's definition of rhetoric, rhetoric is *peri* just and unjust things, but in Socrates's definition it is *peri* the soul. This difference, however, can be attributed to a difference in what Gorgias and Socrates think can be *shaped by* rhetoric. Gorgias, the sophist, says that rhetoric has the power to determine what things are just and unjust; that is, rhetoric can make laws just or unjust. Socrates on the

It might be objected that Plato values this definition for its heuristic value but does not accept it as the definition of rhetoric. The objection has an Aristotelian flavor to it: perhaps Socrates's definition of rhetoric is similar to the "definitions" of human being as *able to laugh* or *featherless biped*. Although the extensions of these definitions will not include any nonhumans, neither of them state what it is to be human. Similarly, the "definition" of rhetoric as the *empeiria* that imitates justice and is concerned with souls and produces flattery may single out rhetoric, but it does not suffice for a definition of it.[22]

In the *Gorgias*, however, Plato seems satisfied that he has said what rhetoric is, for Socrates says that he will not say whether rhetoric is fine or shameful until he states "what it is" (*hoti estin*, 463c5).[23] Moreover, the definition of rhetoric is consistent with the requirements laid

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other hand holds that rhetoric does not effect what is just and unjust but only what the soul considers to be just and unjust. Thus, the difference in judgment about what rhetoric is *peri* is based on the difference between what Gorgias and Socrates think rhetoric can affect. The two definitions also differ on the *ergon* of rhetoric—Gorgias says it is persuasion, but Socrates says it is flattery or a certain kind of pleasure without regard for what is best—but here the difference is less interesting.

22. Olympiodorus (*Commentary on Plato's* Gorgias, 122, 127–9), Dodds (*Plato: Gorgias*, 226), Benardete (*The Rhetoric of Morality and Philosophy*, 32), Zuckert (*Plato's Philosophers*, 540), Kauffman ("The Axiological Foundations of Plato's Theory of Rhetoric," 104), McCoy (*Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, 13), all accept (or at least assume) that Plato is giving a definition of rhetoric in the *Gorg*. (Dancy's comments on the *Gorg*. (*Plato's Introduction of Forms*, 29–30) seem to support the idea that Plato is defining rhetoric, though he thinks the definition differs from other dialogues of definition in which a definition is sought in order to resolve a practical question.) These commentators (and others) do not all think that the definition Plato gives is one he never revises—his comments about rhetoric in the *Phdrs*. suggest to some that he revises the definition in the *Gorg*.—but this is beside the point, which is that Plato is offering a definition of rhetoric. Allen argues that Plato cannot be giving a "real definition" of rhetoric because it does not have an essence: "There can scarcely be real definition of the essence of an imitation of an essence; an eidolon can be defined only in terms of that of which it is an image or spurious imitation" (*Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Gorgias, Menexenus*, 198), but he acknowledges that Plato is giving a definition of rhetoric even if it is not a "real" one. This is consistent with the claim defended in section III.C below: there are different kinds of definitions for different kinds of things.

23. See also *Gorg*. 463e5–6, "Well, I shall try to declare what rhetoric is, as it appears to me" (*All' egô peirasomai phrasai ho ge moi phainetai einai hê rhêtorikê*) and 465d8–e1, "So then, you have heard what I say rhetoric is" (*Ho men oun egô phêmi tên rhêtorikên einai, akêkoas*).

down in the *Euthyphro*. Such continuity suggests that the definition of rhetoric in the *Gorgias* is one that Plato accepts as satisfying the requirements of a good definition.[24]

D. Summary

From our survey of some definitions in the *Euthyphro* and *Gorgias*, we have been able to extract a number of criteria for at least one kind of definition. *D* is a definition of *F*, where *F* is any kind of thing, if *D*

(1) states the necessary conditions of *F*

(2) provides a *paradeigma* of *F*, and

(3) synthesizes *F* into a whole of which *F* is a part.

If *F* is productive—that is, a virtue (perhaps),[25] *technê*, or *empeiria* that imitates a *technê*—then *D* must also

(4) state the *ergon* of *F* and

(5) state what *F* is about (*peri*).

These last two criteria are used to distinguish *F* from the non-*F* parts of the whole into which it is synthesized.

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24. In an article on the *Soph*., Brown argues that the fact that the proposed definitions of the sophist conflict with each other should be taken to indicate that Plato thinks that the sophist cannot be defined because sophistry is not a *technê* and therefore has no essence that can possibly be defined. I do not find her argument for this point convincing. In particular, the claim that sophistry "lacks any essential nature" ("Definition and Division in Plato's *Sophist*," 168) seems too hasty. I have been arguing in this section on the *Gorg*. that Plato gives a definition of rhetoric, which like sophistry is not a *technê* but nonetheless admits of a definition. An important part of Brown's argument that sophistry is not a *technê* depends on the proposition that it does not have a unique goal. In the *Gorg*., however, the goal of sophistry is clearly stated to be a certain kind of *pleasure* (463a–c), and it is distinguished from the *empeiria* of cookery and cosmetics by what it is *peri* and from rhetoric by the manner in which it is *peri* the soul.
25. See note 13.

III. Defining Dynameis *in the* Republic

When Plato says in the Argument that different *dynameis* are distinguished by reference to what they are *epi* and what they accomplish, he effects a number of things. First, he applies, quite naturally, the criteria for definition by synthesis, summarized in section II.D, to *dynameis*. Second, he establishes an *exclusive* way of defining *dynameis*. Third, by doing the first two things he implies that the form of a definition of *F* is determined by the kind of thing *F* is.

Before we get to the details of these points, we need to argue a preliminary point. In the passages we examined from the *Euthyphro* and *Gorgias*, Plato is concerned with giving definitions, but in {C} he only says that *dynameis* are distinguished from each other by what they produce and what they are *epi*. Because defining and distinguishing are not, on the face of it, the same things, we should give some reason for thinking that although Plato does not state directly that *dynameis* are defined by what they are *epi* and what they produce, {C} nonetheless permits us to frame the discussion in terms of *definition* and not simply *distinction*. That is to say, what Plato says in {C} implies no difference between distinguishing one *dynamis* from another and defining a *dynamis*. For if the conditions for defining *A* and *B* differed from the conditions for distinguishing *A* and *B*, then {C} would vitiate Plato's oft-repeated claim that knowing the definition of *A* is the only thing sufficient for making accurate judgments about *A*. In the early and middle dialogues, Plato often claims that if we had a definition of *A* we would be able to make judgments about *A*; in particular, we would be able to distinguish *A* from things that are not-*A*.[26] But if *A* is a *dynamis*, and knowing what *A* produces and is *epi* does not constitute a definition of *A*, then the definition of *A* is insufficient for making judgments about *A*. And if we

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26. *Lach*. 190b–c; *Euph*. 6e; *Rep*. 354b–c; *Hip. Maj*. 286c–e, 304d–e; *Prot*. 360e–361a. For a helpful survey of these and other passages, see Dancy, *Plato's Introduction of Forms*, 23–64. See also Benson, *Socratic Wisdom*, 142–63 for a defense of the view that according to Plato's Socrates "If A knows what F-ness is, then if A were to believe anything about F-ness, what A believes is true" (161).

lack a definition of *A* we will be unable to make accurate judgments about *A*. In the present context, unless distinguishing were the same as defining, the definition of a *dynamis* would be insufficient for distinguishing it from other *dynameis*.[27]

A. Synthesis in {C}

The application of definition by synthesis to *dynameis* is quite natural because Plato treats *dynameis* as essentially productive things, which of course means they have *erga*, just as *technai* do.[28] The most notable difference between the definition of rhetoric in the *Gorgias* and the definitions of *dynameis* in {C} is that the *technai* (and their imitators) in the *Gorgias* are defined in terms of what they are concerned with (*peri*) whereas the definitions of *dynamis* in {C} are in terms of what they are over (*epi*).[29]

Now, in the *Euthyphro* and the *Gorgias* we see Plato explicitly introducing the notions of parts and wholes in order to provide a framework for definitions. Plato states, for example, that the pious is *part of* the just and that rhetoric is the part of *empeiria* that imitates the art of justice. In both dialogues, the procedure of synthesis for producing definitions is implicated by the language of parts and wholes.

In the Argument, although the language of parts and wholes is absent, synthesis is nonetheless endorsed. It is evident in the way that knowledge and belief are both defined in terms of '*dynamis*' and then distinguished from each other. In place of parts and wholes we find the language of '*eidos*' (477e2) and '*genos*' (477c1, d9): within the *genos* of *dynameis*,

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27. One implication of this equivalence is that the definition of the *dynamis* of knowledge can be rather easily given: knowledge is the *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms and produces the cognitive state called "knowledge"; for more on this see section III.C.
28. Cf. *Rep*. 477c1–4.
29. On the meaning of '*epi*' in the Argument, see chapter 2, section II.A.2. Also relevant to the present chapter is the observation (see chapter 2, note 4, and the appendix) that Plato uses '*epi*' but not '*peri*' with verbs of purpose or accomplishment. This reflects an important difference between Plato's treatments of *technê* and *dynamis*.

knowledge and belief are distinguished from each other. This is simply a framework for definition by synthesis without the language of parts and wholes.

B. The Only Way to Define Dynameis

In {C}, Plato says that *dynameis* are distinguished by stating what they produce (*apergazetai*, 477d2) and what they are over (*epi*, 477d1). Plato is explicit on this point: the *only* (*monon*, 477d2) way to distinguish *dynameis* is by stating these two things.[30] In {C}, Plato gives no hint of how he arrives at the conclusion that *dynameis* must be defined only in terms of what they are *epi* and what they produce, but he is clear that one cannot make reference to other qualities a *dynamis* might have in order to distinguish it from other things.

Furthermore, in {C} Plato refers to these two things as the *reason* why knowledge and belief should be put in the same *genos*: they both are *epi* something, and they both produce something. "It is *on this basis*," Plato says, "that I come to call each of the *dynameis* a *dynamis*" (477d2–3). This is similar to the discussion of *technai* in the *Gorgias* because medicine, gymnastic, justice, and the legislative art are grouped together because they each "take care . . . in accord with what is best" (*Gorg*. 464c4–5) and have a *logos* (*Gorg*. 465a3). But it differs from the *Gorgias* inasmuch as *technai* are not the same as *dynameis*. In particular, Plato allows that *technai* may be *peri* the same thing or produce the same thing, but he does not allow that different *dynameis* can be *epi* the same thing or produce the same thing.

By itself, Plato's statement that a distinction between powers must be on the basis of what they are *epi* and what they produce is rather vanilla. What gives this statement its punch is

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30. That there are two criteria for faculties and not just one, see N. P. White, *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, 106n9; and Stokes, "Plato and the Sightlovers of the *Republic*," 290n14: "*ekeino monon* (that alone) at 477d1 contrasts with colour, shape, etc. in the previous sentence, and *hence* does not necessitate the identity of object and effect as a single thing."

Plato's next statement that "that which has been ordered over the same thing and accomplishes the same thing I call the same, but that which is over a different thing and accomplishes a different thing I call different" (*Rep*. 477d3–5). As discussed in chapter 2, section II.C.1, the most likely reason Plato thinks this statement is true is that he is thinking of faculties, not powers in general. As we will see below (section IV) this will be an important point to remember in discussing the method of collection and division in the *Sophist*.

C. Different Kinds of Definitions for Different Kinds of Things

The fact that *dynameis* are grouped together because they are both *epi* something and produce something cannot be accidental to the fact that the definitions of the various *dynameis* can only be given in terms of what they are *epi* and what they produce. It seems, rather, that the proper way of defining a *dynamis* is established by the nature of *dynameis*.

Although we should not cast lightly aside the possibility that whatever can be defined is a *dynamis*—*Sophist* 247e shows that Plato considers this a possibility—if we do not assume that, one aspect of Plato's thinking about definition becomes evident. On the one hand, Plato is committed to the requirement that a definition *always* be about *auto to eidos*; on the other hand, if definitions vary according to the nature of the *definiens* (considered as a thing and not as a mere term), then a definition of a *dynamis* will have different criteria than a definition that is of a different kind of thing. Hence, there are different legitimate ways of stating what *auto to eidos* is.

Since Platonic forms are good candidates to be the objects of definition, this conclusion gains plausibility if we consider the different kinds of forms Plato mentions in the dialogues. As Wedberg has summarized, Plato discusses the following kinds of forms:

(1) ethical and aesthetic forms (goodness, justice, beauty),

(2) logical and metaphysical forms (sameness, difference, being, one, many),

(3) mathematical and geometrical forms (circle, diameter, two, three),

(4) natural kind forms (man, ox, stone), and

(5) artifactual forms (table, couch, shuttle).[31]

Does it make sense to think that any of these forms have instances that are *epi* a unique range of things and produce something? Justice is a promising candidate, based on the facts that Plato refers to it in the *Republic* as having a *dynamis* (358b5) and that he describes it as being applicable to a certain kind of thing—namely, anything with parts that need to be harmonized according to their functions—and as having a unique product, namely, harmony.[32] The geometrical forms, however, do not seem as promising. Take a circle, for example, which is neither *epi* something unique nor productive. In fact, Plato gives a definition of a circle, "the thing which has everywhere equal distances between its extremities and its center" (*Epis. 7*, 342c), that mentions neither *epi* nor *ergon*. Hence, some kinds of forms, namely, the ethical and aesthetic ones, are amenable to definition in the terms set down in {C}, but others are not.

Thus, if one assumes that a definition of the form of *F* must state the "essence" of *F*, then a *dynamis* is in its essence *relational* because a statement of *what it is* must make reference to what it is *epi* and what it produces. As noted above (note 27), this means that knowledge is defined as the *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms and produces a cognitive state called "knowledge." This is the gist of what Plato says in the conclusion of the Explanation of the Argument from Opposites: "the thought [*dianoia*] of this man is knowledge because he knows but the thought of the other one is belief because he believes" (476d4–5). This definition, however, leaves open the

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31. Wedberg, *Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics*, 32–3, 143n8. But note that Wedberg does not include the form of knowledge, which is mentioned in *Phdrs*. 247c–e and *Parm*. 134a.

32. As we know from the extended metaphor of soul and city, justice is in the soul and city precisely in virtue of their having similar kinds of parts that can be arranged in similar ways. So, the soul *qua* conscious or self-moved entity cannot be the proper object of justice; since justice is the proper ordering of the parts of something, it must be that the soul *qua* partitioned thing is a proper object of justice.

important questions of (1) *how* the cognitive state (*dianoia*) called "knowledge" is produced and (2) what the distinctive features of the cognitive state called "knowledge" are. (Chapter 2, section II.A.3, provides an account of the extent to which Plato answers these questions in the *Republic*.) Furthermore, the definition of the *dynamis* of knowledge does not obviate the need for the investigation in the *Theaetetus* because that dialogue, assuming it does not completely reject what is said in the *Republic*, can be understood as an investigation into what the cognitive state called "knowledge" is.[33]

IV. Definition and Division in the Sophist

In this section we will argue that the answer to the question, "How does the account of the definition of *dynameis* assumed in {C} sit with Plato's method of definition in the *Sophist*?" is "Not very well." As we will see, the same property of *dynameis* that serves as an important part of the Argument also prevents them from being defined by the method of definition.

A. Collection and Division in the Sophist

The method of collection and division, which is displayed in the *Sophist*, is a process of successive, dichotomous division beginning from a general class of things and gradually

33. Moreover, the meaning of '*doxa*' in the *Rep*. is not *necessarily* the same in the *Theaet*. (see, e.g., Chappell, *Reading Plato's* Theaetetus, 154), which means that the suggestion that knowledge = true *doxa* with an account is not a nonstarter.

isolating a specific part of the general class.[34] The goal of the process is to discover a *logos* that adequately expresses what the specific part being isolated is.[35]

As the method of collection and division is demonstrated in the *Sophist*, the first step is to collect a number of things into a unified whole on the basis of some property common to all of them. Plato's example of the acquisitive art shows how one could bring together the arts of learning, familiarization, moneymaking, competition, and hunting into a unified whole on the basis that they all "get the better of some of [the things which are and have become] by speeches and actions, and some they do not give up to those who are bent on getting the better of them" (*Soph*. 219c4–7).[36]

Having unified the disparate arts into a *genos* (or *eidos*), the practitioner of the method then proceeds to divide the initial *genos*, *G*, into two—in the *Sophist*, it is always two—parts, *G1* and *G2*, in accord with four criteria. First, *G1* and *G2* must not have any parts that overlap; that is, no part of *G1* can be part of *G2* and vice versa. Second, there must not be any other part of *G* that is not part of *G1* and *G2*.[37] Third, *G1* and *G2* cannot be "empty."[38] In extensional language, each must have at least one member; in intensional language, each must have a meaning. The purpose of this criteria is to maintain the intelligibility of the *logos* produced by the method, for

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34. On whether the terms '*genos*' and '*eidos*' should be interpreted extenstionally or intensionally, see the two articles both titled "Plato's Method of Division" by Moravcsik and Cohen. For present purposes, that dispute does not matter, though Brown is right to say that "neither a fully extensional nor a fully intensional reading of the key terms is possible" ("Definition and Division in Plato's *Sophist*," 155–6).
35. In the *Stat.*, Plato says that the goal is to "find it [the art in question] and, once we've separated and removed it from everything else, stamp a single *idea* on it, and by putting the seal of a single different *eidos* upon all the rest of the turn-offs make our soul come to understand all the sciences as being two *eidê*" (258c3–7).
36. References to the *Soph*. are to Duke et al.
37. Rickless has named the first criterion the exclusiveness requirement and the second the exhaustiveness requirement ("Plato's Definition(s) of Sophistry," 292).
38. In 219e8 Plato makes the point that a division is possible only if both things into which the thing to be divided exist. Plato is careful to distinguish this requirement from thinking that a name must be given to each of the things divided (220d4). Sometimes (e.g., 225d4–11) he offers a somewhat made-up name for the thing divided, but other times (e.g., 267a11–b2) he does not attempt to give a name. In both cases, however, he assumes that the two classes created by a division exist.

the method gets its intuitive appeal and explanatory power from distinguishing by *contrasts*. If there is no contrast, then the method cannot properly be said to involve *division*. Fourth, each time a *genos* is partitioned, each of the resulting parts must be a natural kind.[39] The process of division is repeated until, in the search for the sophist, say, we "strip away all things he [the sophist] has in common and leave his own nature" (*Soph*. 264e3–265a1). In other words, we will have a definition of what the sophist is.

The *Sophist* contains not one but seven definitions of the sophist.[40] Let us take the last definition as an illustration of how the method is supposed to work.[41] What follows represents a common way of explaining this definition of the sophist, though as we will see in section IV.C it is not entirely accurate.

We start with the general class of *technai*, which is divided into acquisitive and productive arts. In the productive arts we distinguish divine and human productions. Each of these are divided into two parts on the basis of whether what is produced is some thing or an image of something. The part of human production that makes images is divided into two parts, eikastics (the art of reproducing things exactly as they are) and phantastics (the art of reproducing beautiful things in a way that makes them look beautiful).[42] Phantastics is divided on the basis of whether it is made using instruments or with one's body. The phantastics that uses only one's body is divided according to whether the production is done ignorantly (call this "belief-mimicry") or knowledgeably ("informed-mimicry"). The phantastics done ignorantly

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39. The fourth criterion, unlike the first three, is not made explicit until the *Stat*., and the degree to which it is observed in the *Soph*. is not clear. See *Stat*. 262a–b: "Let's not remove a single and small part over against many and great parts, and let's not do it apart from *eidê* either, but let the part have at the same time an *eidos*"; see also 262b–263a. Plato says (*Soph*. 264e3–265a1) that the goal of the method is to find and display the unique *nature* of the sophist by dividing the *genos* in which he can be found. This connection between the nature and the *genos* of the sophist reinforces the claim that to divide according to *genê* is the same as dividing into natural kinds.
40. The multiplicity has been explained in various ways. For some attempts, see Rickless, "Plato's Definition(s) of Sophistry," and Brown, "Definition and Division in Plato's *Sophist*."
41. The definition is produced from 264c–268d.
42. See *Soph*. 235d–236c.

with one's body is divided according to whether the maker is aware of his lack of knowledge (thus, "ironic") or not ("sincere"). Those who produce a semblance ignorantly by their body alone and knowing that they lack knowledge are divided into those who make something in long speeches in public (demagogues) and short speeches in private (sophists). Sophistry is then defined as the art of human imitation-making exercising phantastics with the body, ironically, and ignorantly in short speeches in private. Figure 1 shows how this is often illustrated, starting from human imitating.

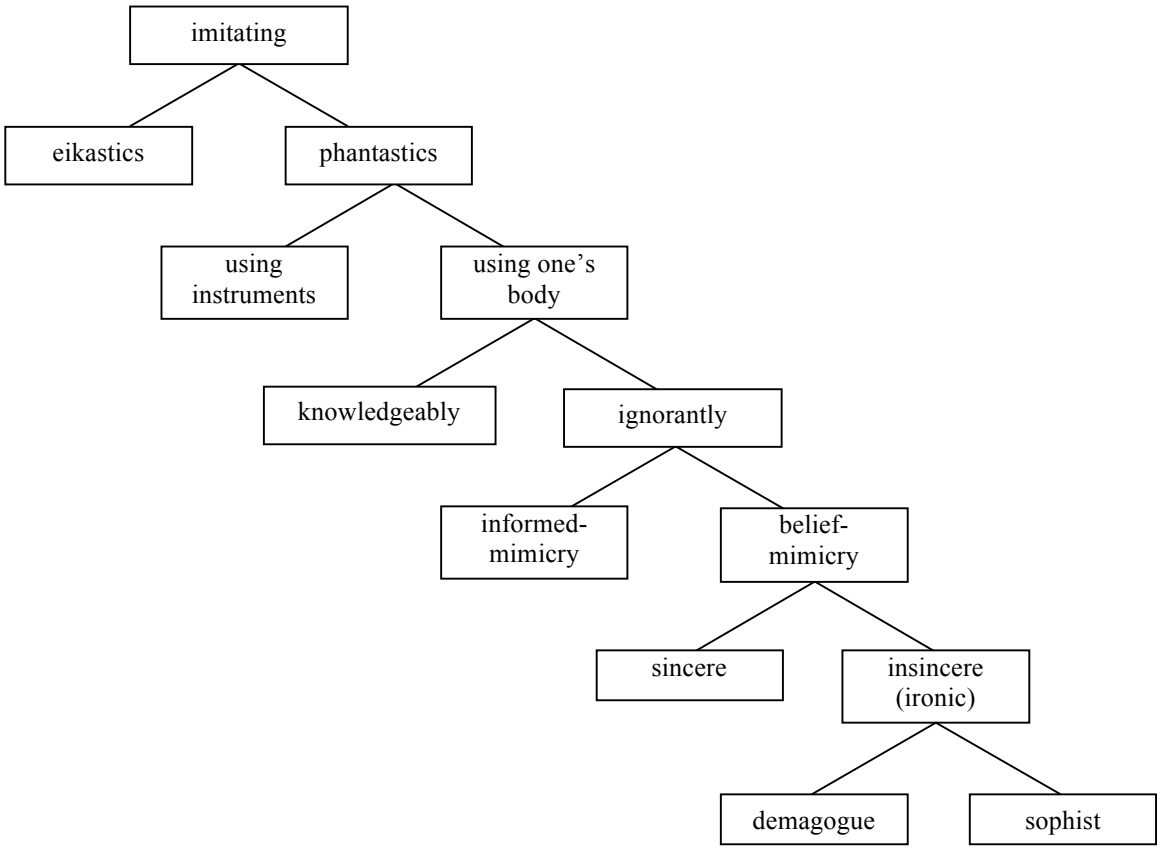

Fig. 5.1. The art of making (264c–268d)

B. A Problem for Divisions of Dynameis

Recall now the definition of knowledge derived from the Argument: the *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms and produces the cognitive state called "knowledge." In what follows we will see that this definition of knowledge cannot be reached by the method of collection and division because the definition of knowledge cannot be produced by *successive* divisions. That is, it cannot be produced by first dividing the class of *dynameis* into a *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms and a *dynamis* that is *epi* something other than the forms, and then dividing the *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms into that which produces knowledge and that which does not produce knowledge.[43] This division will not work because it violates the third criterion for division, that neither part resulting from a division be "empty." (See figure 2.) On Plato's view the *dynamis* that is *epi* the forms cannot be divided into that which produces knowledge and that which produces something else because there is nothing *epi* the forms that produces something other than knowledge.

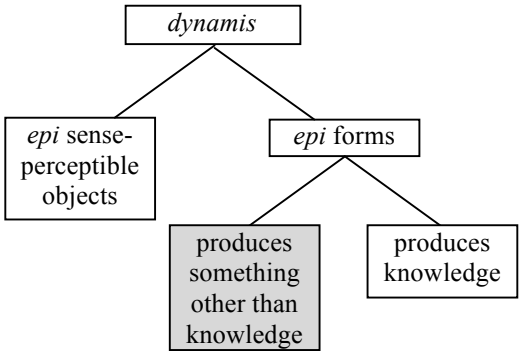

Fig. 5.2. A mistaken attempt to define knowledge

43. Nor, alternatively, by dividing *dynameis* into those that produce knowledge and those that produce something else and then dividing those that produce knowledge into those that are *epi* the forms and those that are *epi* other things.

So the two conditions, being *epi* the forms and producing a cognitive state called "knowledge," are not conditions that can be satisfied by making successive divisions but must be applied somehow together at once. In defining knowledge, Plato requires two divisions at the same time, which result in two "empty" classes, the class of things *epi* sense-perceptible objects that produces the cognitive state called "knowledge" and the class of things *epi* the forms that produces the cognitive state called "belief."

Thus, Plato's insistence that *dynameis* (by which, in the Argument, he means "faculties") can only be distinguished if they are *epi* different things and produce different things is difficult to square with the third requirement governing the method of collection and division.

C. Two Unsatisfying Solutions

This difficulty could be eliminated in two ways. First, we could assume that in the case of faculties Plato allows simultaneous division by multiple differentiae. Or, secondly, we could assume that he thinks a division into what faculties are *epi* is coterminous with (hence redundant with respect to) a division into what faculties produce.

The first possibility parallels the point made above (section III.C) that the form of a definition of *F* is determined by the nature of *F*, only the present case is that the *method* of defining *F* is determined by the nature of *F*. In particular, in the case of something, such as a faculty, *F*, which is distinguished from other things of the same kind only by reference to two "differentiae," the method of establishing a definition of *F* differs from the method of establishing a definition of anything that is not a faculty. The change we need to make in the method of defining *F* is to allow simultaneous division by multiple differentiae.

One might think that this is implausible because it suggests exactly what Aristotle criticizes Platonists for *not* doing. In the *Parts of Animals*, Aristotle argues that the practitioners

of "dichotomy" do not allow for simultaneous division by multiple differentiae.[44] They insist, says Aristotle, on successive division by one differentia at a time. Thus, the objection to the present suggestion is that Plato cannot have allowed simultaneous division by multiple differentiae because Aristotle would not have criticized him for failing to allow it.

Inasmuch as this response depends on Aristotle's accurate understanding of Plato's views, it is less than decisive. In this case, Aristotle is mistaken if he thinks that Plato does not allow simultaneous division by multiple differentiae.

First, recall the seventh definition of the sophist, partially illustrated in figure 1. Like many other representations of the seventh definition the genus-species tree works well enough on the first six accounts of the sophist, but one has to do some hand-waving in order to apply it to the seventh when the stranger tells Theaetetus to "cut" (*temne*) the art of making both widthwise (*kata platos*) and lengthwise (*kata mêkos*).[45] We avoided this difficulty in figure 1 by simply starting from the *genos* of human imitating because in a diagram like figure 1 the distinction between length and width makes no sense.

The solution to this is to try a different kind of image. (See figure 3 at end.) This kind of diagram has the advantage of allowing simultaneous division by multiple differentiae.[46] It essentially allows Plato to divide in two cuts (instead of three) the art of making into the arts of (1) divine making of things themselves, (2) divine making of images, (3) human making of

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44. *Part*. *Anim*., 642b9–20.
45. *Soph*. 265e8–266a3. For the typical way of diagramming this, see Klein (*Plato's Trilogy*, 73) and Brown ("Definition and Division in Plato's *Sophist*," 161). Some treatments of the seventh definition (e.g., Sayre in *Plato's Analytic Method*) simply do not give a diagram of the last account.
46. Note also how nicely this approach fits with Plato's use of the language of parts and wholes and passages like 264d–265a, with its language of splitting and cuts: "Well, then, let's try once more, by splitting (*schizontes*) in two the proposed genus, to proceed always toward the right-hand part (*meros*) of the cut (*tmêthentos*), keeping to that in which the sophist shares, until, once we strip away all things that he has in common and leave his own nature, we may exhibit it, primarily to ourselves, and then to those who are by nature nearest in genus to a method of this sort." It also tends to minimize the hierarchical nature of Plato's use of '*genos*' and '*eidos*.' For a defense of a nonhierarchical scheme, see Rosenmeyer, "Plato's Hypothesis and the Upward Path," and Moravcsik, "The Anatomy of Plato's Divisions," 333–5.

things themselves, and (4) human making of images. Hence, it is mistaken to think that Plato does not allow simultaneous division by multiple differentiae.

However, this by itself is inadequate to satisfy the third criterion, for unlike the division in the *Sophist*, a similar division of *dynameis* would result in two empty classes, as noted at the beginning of this section. (See figure 4 at end.)

This leaves the second suggestion for eliminating the tension between the method of collection and division in the *Sophist* and the definition of *dynameis*: perhaps Plato thinks a division into what faculties are *epi* is coterminous with (and so redundant with respect to) a division into what faculties produce. In the Argument, this is accomplished by {14} and {15}.[47] On the assumptions expressed by {14} and {15}, *dynameis* can be defined by a division in terms of what they are *epi* or in terms of what they produce, and having established one division it is unnecessary to establish the other.[48] Hence, although *dynameis* are defined by two necessary conditions, satisfying one condition entails satisfying the other.

The fact that *dynameis* are defined only by two necessary conditions leads us to ask whether there are any other instances in which one division suffices to specify a class that is supposed to be specified by two criteria. Is there, in the *Sophist* anyway, a class of things that are supposed to be specified by two criteria, and if so are they handled in the *Sophist* in a way that can be adapted to overcome the problems raised above for defining *dynameis*?

The obvious candidate is the class of *technai*. As we saw in our discussion of the *Gorgias*, a *technê* is defined in terms of what it is concerned with and what it produces. The *technê* of medicine, for example, is concerned with the body and produces health in the body; the

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47. For ease of reference: {14} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* are over different things, then *X* and *Y* accomplish different things; {15} If *X* and *Y* are faculties and *X* and *Y* accomplish different things, then *X* and *Y* are over different things.

48. For a parallel from Aristotle's thought, note that his distinction between virtues can be categorized as either "moral and intellectual" or between "those that admit of the mean and those that do not."

technê of justice is, according to the *Gorgias*, concerned with the soul and produces health in the soul. In general, Plato holds that *technai* are distinguished by these two things.

In the *Sophist*, the (alleged) art of sophistry is defined by what it produces and what it is concerned with. Of course, the members of the heptad of definitions do not agree about what sophistry produces and what it is concerned with, but that is not germane to the present inquiry. The question of whether sophistry is a genuine *technai* is also not relevant because even if Plato does not think it is a genuine art he treats it as if it were one. What is relevant is that in the *Sophist* each of the seven definitions contains a reference to what sophistry produces and what it is concerned with. In the first definition, for example, sophistry is concerned with "the wealthy and prominent young" (*Soph*. 223b4) and produces conviction (*pithanourgikos*, 222d3). In the second definition sophistry is "concerned with [*peri*] speeches and learnings of virtue" (224d1) and produces money for the sophist (224b1–2).[49] And so on for the remaining definitions. The important point is that Plato is careful to always single out both what the (alleged) *technê* of the sophist is concerned with and what it produces.

The difference between *technai* and *dynameis* is that Plato thinks that different *technai*, unlike different *dynameis*, can be concerned with the same thing. Medicine and gymnastics, for example, are both concerned with the body; justice and the legislative art are both concerned with the soul. The same is not true for the *dynameis* of knowledge and belief. Knowledge is *epi* the forms; belief is *epi* sense-perceptible objects. This difference is crucial because it allows Plato to divide *technai* that are concerned with the same thing without violating the no-empty-classes criterion. For example, Plato can separate the *technai* concerned with the soul from those concerned with the body, and then in turn divide the *technai* concerned with the soul into justice

49. We see again (cf. note 21) that the meaning of '*peri*' is fluid; in the first definition, sophistry is *peri* young people, but in the second it is *peri* speeches (*logoi*) and learning.

and the legislative art. As noted above in section IV.B, this is not possible in the case of *dynameis*. Hence, the model of defining *technai* by collection and division cannot be appropriated to produce definitions of *dynameis*.

V. Conclusion

In general, two different conclusions can be drawn from the conclusion that the *dynameis* of knowledge and belief (and all other *dynameis*, too) cannot be defined in terms of the method of collection and division. Those who think that Plato rejects the two-worlds theory in the dialogues after the *Republic* will tend to hold that the incompatibility indicates that the criteria for defining *dynameis* should be rejected, too. Those who think that Plato does not reject or substantially revise the two-worlds theory will hold that a definition of a *dynamis* must be produced by some way other than the method illustrated in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

My own sympathies lie with the latter approach, and I think we should not be entirely surprised by the outcome because Plato is a pluralist about such things in that he holds that we must acquire our knowledge of each thing itself by whatever method is best suited to each thing. In the case of the *dynameis* of knowledge and belief, that method turns out not to be the method of collection and division.

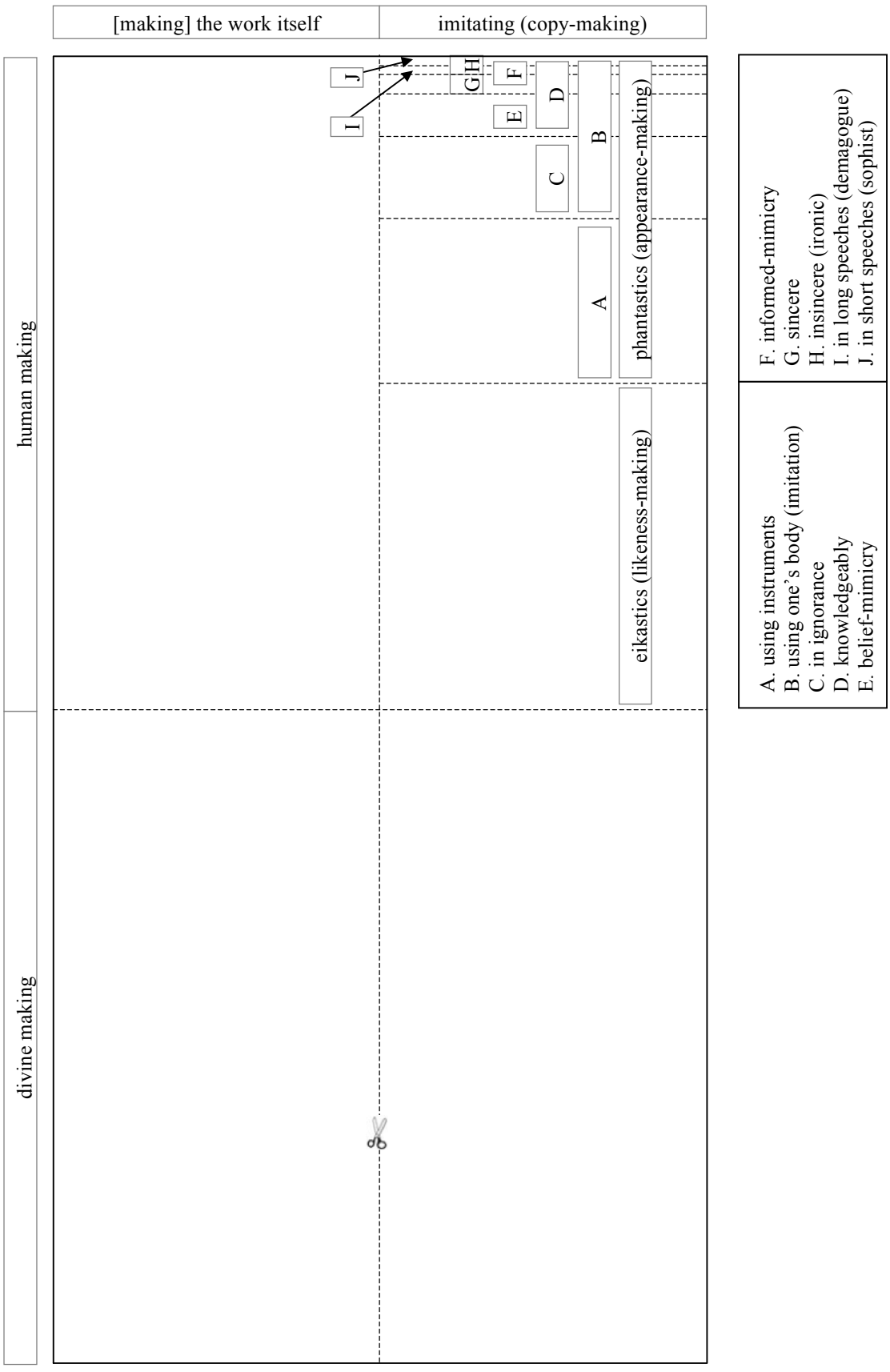

Fig. 5.3. A better diagram of the art of making

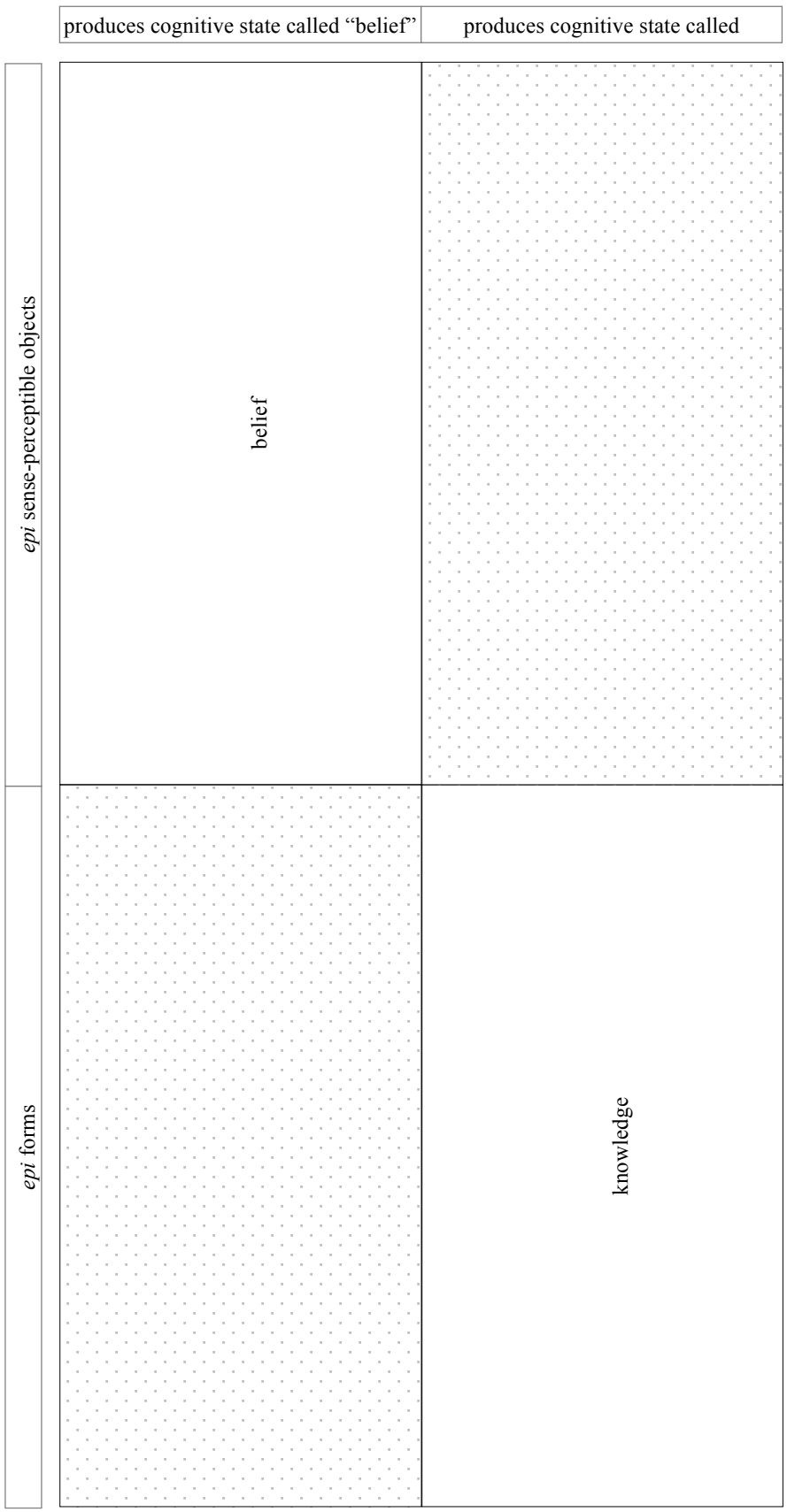

Fig. 5.4. Another mistaken attempt to define

CONCLUSION

In the introduction, we stated a number of questions the dissertation is intended to answer. By way of summary, let us review the answers given.

First, What is the Argument intended to prove? In chapter 1, we saw that the Argument is intended to show that the lovers of sights and sounds are not philosophers and that anyone who claims to know must acknowledge the existence of the forms. We also saw, in chapter 3, that the Argument is not intended to prove the existence of the forms.

Secondly, How is the Argument supposed to prove that the lovers of sights and sounds are not philosophers? In one sense, this question can only be answered by following the inferences laid out in the reconstructions in chapter 1. In another sense, however, we can say that the Argument proves its conclusions by showing that the LSS version is invalid but the Platonic version is not. The main difference between the two versions of the Argument stems from divergent understandings of '*einai*,' which Plato purposefully exploits.

Thirdly, Why does Plato think the Argument is necessary? The Argument is needed in order to distinguish the philosophers from the lovers of sights and sounds because the lovers of sights and sounds cannot be distinguished by the criteria employed earlier in the *Republic*. Philosophers must desire knowledge of *everything*, and the lovers of sights and sounds believe that they do. Plato argues that they do not have knowledge of anything; *a fortiori*, they do not have knowledge of everything. Moreover, they do not even have a desire for knowledge of everything because that would require them to desire knowledge of the forms, of which they deny the existence.

Fifthly, What are Plato's accounts of knowledge and belief that he refers to in the Argument? In chapter 2, we saw that, according to Plato, the faculty of knowledge is over

unchanging, eternal, and invisible objects, and the faculty of belief is over changing, temporal, and perceptible objects. Thus, philosophers have knowledge of the forms whereas the lovers of sights and sounds have only beliefs about sense-perceptible objects. Concerning the nature of knowledge and belief in Plato, we saw that knowledge requires the ability to produce an accurate explanation of the forms that represents them as they are on the basis of the knower's own character, thought, and experience. Forming true belief is a matter of believing what contributes to the preservation of the good condition of oneself, and the belief is "justified" if guided by knowledge.

Sixthly, Why does Plato think the Argument will be persuasive? Although Plato knows he cannot guarantee that the lovers of sights and sounds will be persuaded by the Argument, he does think that his account of the tripartite soul provides a good measure of support for thinking that they will. In particular, because he thinks that the lovers of sights and sounds are dominated by their desires, he offers them an argument in order to strengthen their capacity to reason. He dare not try to persuade them by means of a myth because he does not want to appeal to their spirited element, which is subject to their desires.

Lastly, How do the ideas about *dynameis* expressed in the Argument fit with what Plato says elsewhere about definition? As we saw in chapter 5, Plato claims that the only way to distinguish faculties is by what they produce and what they are over. His claim naturally develops from the way *technai* are defined in the *Gorgias*, but it conflicts with the method of collection and division in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

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APPENDIX

I. Uses of 'epi' *with the Dative in the* Republic

*A. '*epi*' = "about," "concerned with"*

599a8: Do you suppose that if someone were able to make both, the thing to be imitated and the phantom, he would permit himself to be serious *epi* (about) the crafting of the phantoms . . . ?
599b5: he would be far more serious *epi* (about) the deeds than the imitations and would try to leave many fair deeds behind
470b5, 7, 8: It appears to me that just as two different names are used, war and faction, so two things also exist and the names are *epi* (concerned with) differences in these two. The two things I mean are, on the one hand, what is one's own and akin, and what is alien, and foreign, on the other. Now the name faction is *epi* (about) the hatred of one's own, war is *epi* (about) the hatred of the alien.
490d4: but if they let the arguments go and looked to the men themselves whom the argument is *epi* (concerned with), they would say . . .

*B. '*epi*' = "for" in the sense of "purpose of" or "used for"*

333c11: justice is useful *epi* (for) it
334b5, 5: justice . . . seems . . . to be a certain art of stealing, *epi* (for) the benefit, to be sure, of friends, and *epi* (for) the harm of enemies
341e7: The art [of medicine] was devised *epi* (for) providing what is advantageous for the body.
342a4: Just as eyes need sight and ears hearing, for this reason a *technê* is needed that will consider and provide what is advantageous *epi* (for) them.
353a4: But I suppose you could not do as fine a job with anything other than a pruning knife made *epi* (for) this purpose.[1]
376e2, 3: Isn't it difficult to find a better one than that discovered over a great expanse of time? It is, of course, *gymnastikê epi* (for) bodies and *mousikê epi* (for) the soul.[2]
590d1: It's not that we suppose the slave must be ruled *epi* (for) his own detriment, as Thrasymachus supposes about the ruled.

*C. '*epi*'= "over," "on"*

511d6, 8: And, along with me, take these four affections arising in the soul *epi* (over) the four segments: understanding *epi* (over) the highest one, and thought *epi* (over) the second . . .
511e2: Arrange them in a proportion and believe (regard) that just as that to which it is *epi* (over) participates in truth, so also it participates in clarity.

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1. Cf. *Rep*. 352e.
2. Note that Plato also uses '*peri*' with the accusative to similar effect; see *Rep*. 521e3.

523e3: whether it lies (*keisthai*) in the middle or *epi* (on) the extremes
534a6: But as for the proportion between the things that these are *epi* (over) . . . let's let that go.

D. 'epi' = combination of A, B, and C

(1) "Concerned with" and "over," without an emphasis of purpose

345d2: The shepherd's art surely cares for nothing but providing the best for what is has been *epi* (put in charge of)
346d6: so it is with all the others [arts]: each accomplishes its own work and benefits that which it has been ordered *epi* (in charge of)
477b8, 8, 10: Then belief is ordered *epi* (over) one thing and knowledge *epi* (over) another thing, each according to its faculty.
480a1, 1: Won't we assert that these men delight in and love what knowledge is *epi* (over), and the others on what belief is *epi* (over)?
524a1, 2: first, the sense *epi* (over) the hard is also compelled to be *epi* (over) the soft.[3]

(2) "Concerned with" and "over," with a nuance of purpose

341d8, 8, 10: And isn't the art . . . naturally *epi* this, *epi* seeking and providing for the advantage of each? Yes, that is what it is *epi*.
370b3: different [people] are *epi* different *ergou*[4]
374c1: to each one of the others we assigned one thing, the one *epi* what his nature fitted him . . .
477a10, 11, 11: Therefore, since knowledge was *epi* 'that which is', but of necessity ignorance was *epi* 'that which not is', mustn't we seek for something *epi* the in-between between ignorance and knowledge, if there happens to be some such thing?
477d2, 4: But in a faculty I look only to this: what it is *epi* and what it accomplishes; and on this I called each of them a faculty. And that which has been ordered *epi* the same thing and accomplishes the same thing I call the same, but that which is *epi* a different thing and accomplishes a different thing I call different.
478a4: Since each is capable of something different, are they, therefore, naturally *epi* different things?
478a6: Knowledge . . . is *epi* 'that which is', to know what 'that which is' is.
478a13: If different faculties are naturally *epi* different things . . .
478d8: neither knowledge nor ignorance will be *epi* it
610e7, 8: whenever its own badness and its own evil are not sufficient to kill and destroy a soul, an evil arranged (*tetagmenon*) *epi* the destruction of something else will hardly destroy a soul, or anything else except that *epi* which it has been ordered (*tetaktai*).

3. Cf. Gonzalez, "Propositions or Objects?" 254–5.
4. Based on a variant reading; see Slings for details.

II. Uses of ‘peri*’ with the Accusative in the* Republic

373b4, 5, c1: all the hunters and imitators, many *peri* (concerned with) figures and colors, many *peri* (concerned with) music; and . . . craftsman of all sorts of equipment, *peri* (for) feminine adornment as well as other things.
439b5: the same thing wouldn’t perform opposed actions *peri* (concerning) the same thing with the same part of itself at the same time.
452a4: Then these two arts, and what’s *peri* (concerned with) war, must be assigned to the women also
455a2: won’t we bid the man who says the opposite to teach us this very thing—with respect to what art or what practice *peri* (connected with) the organization of a city the nature of a woman and a man is not the same, but rather different?
504e5: as to what you mean by the greatest study and what it’s *peri* (about), do you think anyone is going to let you go without asking what it is?
511d1: these men, in my opinion, don’t possess intelligence *peri* (about) the objects, even though they are, given a beginning, intelligible
521e3: gymnastic . . . is wholly *peri* (concerned with) coming into being and passing away.
525a9: And . . . the arts of calculation and number are both wholly *peri* (concerned with) number.
529b5: I . . . am unable to hold that any study makes a soul look upward other than the one that’s *peri* (concerned with) ‘what is’ and is invisible.
534a3, 3: and opinion’s *peri* (about) coming into being and understanding’s *peri* (about) being
585d1, 2: Generally, isn’t it the case that the classes that are *peri* (concerned with) the care of the body participate less in truth and being than those that are *peri* (concerned with) the care of the soul.
586d3, 4: Of the desires *peri* (concerned with) the love of gain and the love of victory
596a7: For we are, presumably, accustomed to set down some one particular form *peri* (for) each of the particular ‘manys’ (*ta polla*) to which we apply the same name.
596b3: But as for forms *peri* (for) these furnishings, there are presumably two, one of couch, one of table.
602e8: Didn’t we say that it is impossible for the same thing to believe contraries at the same time *peri* (about) the same things?